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THE PROBLEM OF REUNION

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THE PROBLEM OF REUNION

DISCUSSED HISTORICALLY IN SEVEN ESSAYS

BY

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1920

TO MY LATE CHIEF

THE REV. JOHN SIMMS, C.B., C.M.G., D.D., K.H.C.

PRINCIPAL CHAPLAIN TO THE

BRITISH EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

1914–19

AND

TO MY LATE COLLEAGUES

OF MANY DENOMINATIONS

THESE PAGES ARE

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

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PREFACE

THAT a Catholic of the Roman, and therefore, as he believes, of the only true communion, should venture to discuss the problem of reunion to many may appear surprising. What is there to say, and of what possible use can it be to say it, seeing that reunion is so plainly impossible?

Had it not been for the war these sentiments might well have been those of the present writer. But four years' experience in an army that has been drawn from all parts of the earth, and in which one is thrown into the closest conjunction with men of every possible shade of belief, cannot but modify, if not one's belief, at any rate one's outlook in a matter that after all should be of interest to all who call themselves Catholics. Reunion with Rome is undoubtedly for the majority of Englishmen and Scotsmen a long way off, but it is also undoubtedly much nearer than it was fifty years or ten years ago. The desire of a world-wide and united Church is growing stronger every day, and though it appeals to men mainly as an ideal, they admit that the Church that *is* world-wide and one, must of necessity be included. This means that reunion with Rome must some day become for all Christians a practical problem, and that already we should be looking ahead with a view to preparing the way for it. That, in fact, is precisely what the Oxford movement is doing for Anglicans, and what the Free Catholic movement is already beginning to do for Nonconformists. There are those who complain that these movements are keeping men out of what *we* believe to be the one true Church. On the contrary, they are providing us with hundreds of converts, and what is of even greater moment, are working as a leaven in the country at large, dispelling ignorance, breaking down prejudice, and leading men from truth to truth, in a way that to us is impossible. Reunion is a long way

off, but the path to it is being rapidly straightened, thanks largely to the tireless zeal and endless patience of those who, as yet, see with us in part only.

The war, too, has done much to dispel prejudice and broaden ideas and ideals. The inhabitants of this island, once so contemptuous of the foreigner, have fought with him side by side, lived in his houses, worshipped in his churches, seen him at his prayers, and so have come to know and respect him. Unity of interest has led to a broadening of sympathy and widening of outlook. Between nations, and also to some extent between Churches, there has arisen a spirit of fellowship such as never existed before. Surely that also bespeaks a notable advance. Unity can come only if we seek it in common, and have first of all a like desire and a mutual understanding.

Other reunions also are being discussed as a preliminary to the great one which is ultimately to eventuate. In these, as Catholics, we have less interest, since we feel that they do not concern us. Yet indirectly they do concern us, since they profess to be steps toward that world-wide reunion which shall unite all Christians in one fold. To the cause of Christ, which for us means the Catholic cause, they will either be beneficial or harmful. In either case they should interest us, and to discuss them with a view either to help or to hinder, certainly falls within our province. As their aim is admittedly to help, so also should ours be, if this be possible. For however great our differences may be, in purpose, at any rate, we are united. We all of us want to believe as Christ would have us believe, and to worship and do as He would bid us.

Here also the war has helped, for it has brought home at any rate to chaplains at the front this all-important unity of endeavour and purpose. Representatives of different denominations have of necessity been brought into the closest relationship. This applies not to Catholics and Anglicans only, but also, and more especially, to Catholics and Free Churchmen. In the early days of the war there was but one Chaplains' Department for British troops in France, but soon there became two: Anglicans seceded, leaving together in the original department under Principal Simms, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, and a group of Nonconformists, known as 'the United Board.' One can hardly suppose

that in sanctioning this curious arrangement the War Office had any subconscious desire to promote the cause of reunion, yet before two opposite standpoints can hope to be reconciled they must come into personal and friendly contact, and that is precisely what the War Office unintentionally has brought about. Before the war Catholics and Free Churchmen regarded each other almost as hereditary foes: during the war priests and ministers have not only worked together as comrades, sharing often the same mess and sometimes the same billet, but they have also met together weekly or monthly—sometimes under an R.C., sometimes under a 'Protestant' senior—to discuss affairs of mutual interest, have rendered one another innumerable small services, have become friendly and at times even intimate, and so have come to understand one another and to appreciate one another's ideals and devotion as they never could otherwise have done. Many little stories could doubtless be told of differences and difficulties, but still more could be told of sweet reasonableness and friendly assistance. Antagonism, suspicion, prejudice, and misunderstanding have given place to sympathy and mutual esteem. We differ, and on many points vitally; but we at any rate appreciate one another, and to some extent appreciate our very differences.

What the Spirit of God has begun in answer to our persistent petitions, and the war, inspired by evil motives, but working for good, has fostered, it is the aim of these essays to help on. The problem of reunion is complicated, and the issues at stake obscured by a cloud of dust for which past controversies are largely responsible. Yet somewhere, hidden away in the past, lies the root-cause of all our differences; and somewhere, too, lies hidden the clue that with God's blessing is going to solve them. It is these we must seek to discover, if reunion is ever to be accomplished, remembering always that in spite of diversity our aim is the same, and that, though conflict results, it is engaged in on all sides from good motives.

Written in this spirit, the writer is not without hope that in a like spirit these pages may be read, and that, if hard things—though not offensive things, he trusts—have been said, they will be taken, as they are meant, in all charity. The draft copy of these essays was written in odds and ends of places in France, and the writing of it was frequently interrupted, three times in 1918, by

the advance of the enemy with whom then we were fighting. Under such circumstances to consult the works of others is difficult, though, on the other hand, one had ample opportunity of consulting others' opinions, and many of these pages have been read in advance, and with much benefit to the writer, by friends of other denominations. What was lacking in the matter of precise information has also been remedied, now that the armistice and peace have brought us at least a measure of tranquillity. The writer does not claim to have discovered a method of setting the whole world to rights. He merely desires to throw out suggestions such as to him history seems plainly to make. Neither does he claim any brief to speak on behalf of the Church of which he has the happiness to be a member, though he has endeavoured faithfully to set forth her attitude and spirit. His function is not to discuss terms, but rather to cry with the prophet: Let us reflect on the past and repent of its error, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

My thanks are due to Mr. George Segar, who has kindly read all the proofs, and to many others who have assisted me by their comments.

LESLIE J. WALKER, S.J.

Campion Hall, Oxford.

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55. Toward which end the Church works, and God works, and we also should help.

THE PROBLEM OF REUNION

ESSAY I

THE NEED OF REUNION

'If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.'—MATT. v. 23, 24.

1. *The Growth of Sceptical Indifference.*

§ 1. As Christ suffered crucifixion rather than renounce His claim to be the Son of the Living God, and Stephen was stoned to death proclaiming that he saw Christ standing on the right hand of God;[1] so also, in all ages, Christians have been ready to die, and have died by thousands, rather than deny the faith that was in them. Nor have Christians died merely for the first principles of Christian faith. When disputes arose and faith became diverse, men were found to be just as ready to die for their differences as their forefathers had been to die for fundamentals. The Reformation destroyed for Protestants much that had hitherto been regarded as of the faith of Christ; but it by no means lessened their esteem for faith itself, whether positive or negative. Those of our forefathers who retained belief in the Mass and in papal supremacy, and those who repudiated the Mass and papal supremacy were just as ready to give their lives rather than renounce their respective beliefs, as their ancestors had been to give theirs rather than renounce belief in one God or in the Divinity of Christ. What they quarrelled about may or may not have been matter of opinion: *they*, at any rate, did not so regard it. So sure were they of the truth of what they believed, or of the errors that they repudiated and condemned, that they were quite unable to credit their opponents' sincerity. To those that believed

[1] Acts vii. 55.

in the Mass, to deny the Mass was to deny Christ. It was worse than revolt against the State : it was revolt against God. Therefore it was worthy of death. To those that conceived that they had purified Christ's faith on biblical lines, the Mass was idolatry. To advocate it or to attend it was a crime against God, and for those who were guilty of such a crime no penalty was too severe. The Mass must be eradicated at all costs.

In this twentieth century we look with horror upon the methods by which our forefathers sought to maintain their faith—especially if that faith happens to be a different one from our own. The severity of the laws that were passed by Catholics against heresy and by Protestants against Catholics, the terrible persecutions that ensued, the cruelty that characterised a century of religious war, are nowadays regarded by everyone as the deplorable result of misguided zeal. We have just finished slaughtering one another by the million in the cause of democracy, and have employed for that purpose every means that modern science could discover, regardless of cost, but that Christians should have done so in the cause and in the name of Christ, even if they did it less skilfully and on a much smaller scale, is held to be a lasting disgrace to the very name of Christianity. And so it must be from the modern point of view, for we are convinced of the sincerity of our fellow Christians beyond the shadow of a doubt. Our forefathers were not ; and that made all the difference. Conscientious objectors, in their eyes, were one and all frauds. To us, the courage and long suffering that conscientious objectors have so consistently displayed under persecution has become a sufficient proof alike of their conscientiousness and of the futility of persecuting them. The inhibition of a propaganda dangerous to religion or the State may be justifiable under certain circumstances ; but the only conversions worth having are those that come freely and from the heart.[1] Our forefathers may or may not have realised this, but they certainly did not realise either the injustice or the futility of persecution. And the reason why they failed to realise it was the very intensity with which each and all of them, whether Protestants or Catholics, believed each and every doctrine of their faith, both positive and negative, to be of the essence of Christianity.

§ 2. The change that has taken place in the attitude of Christians in regard to persecution since the days of the Reformation has been accompanied by another change, which is scarcely less widespread, and by no means less significant. The faith for which our forefathers persecuted so vigorously and died so bravely is fast becoming for the multitude a matter of no consequence at all. It is not

[1] Cf. Council of Trent, Sess. 3, cap. III and can. 3 *de Fide*.

merely that Christians have ceased to regard their differences as of such vital importance, or that a spirit of comradeship among the Churches is gradually replacing the old spirit of antagonism and intolerance—that also is true. But the growth of a more tolerant spirit is not always due to a better understanding of Gospel principles or to a broadening of Christian fellowship. It is due only too often to an easy-going indifference which maintains that it does not matter much what you believe so long as your conduct is right. With the disappearance of faith's differences is disappearing also faith itself. Whereas in days gone by men were equally ready to inflict or to suffer martyrdom in the cause of any principle that they believed to be part of Christ's revelation, in our day men are rapidly becoming oblivious of the fact that Christ has given the world a revelation at all, and seem to care very little whether He has done so or not. Christian ethics are still much admired, but as to what Christianity means over and above its ethical code, the world of to-day knows but little and cares less.

§ 3. Indifference is rampant everywhere, among scientists, lawyers, doctors, and professional men generally, no less than among the labouring classes; among university men quite as much as among those that have been brought up in a council school; among those who work in the fields only slightly less than among those who are employed in factories, offices, and shops. It is to be found in Catholic countries as well as in those that are predominantly Protestant. It has affected both women and men. It is also, like tuberculosis, all the more insidious because it exists in people who are not aware that there is anything the matter with them at all. All Churches are losing by it, and losing so heavily that, unless it is dealt with at once, Christendom will one day wake up to discover that it is no longer Christian at all.

Indifference takes different forms in different countries. Where the majority of the people are nominally Catholics, it is not always attended by loss of faith. Faith that is strong, may linger on even in those who have ceased to attend public worship or to frequent the sacraments. The value of death-bed repentances is doubtless open to question, but they are at any rate of common enough occurrence. Even those who have never practised their religion since the days of their first communion not infrequently send for the priest at the last moment. Indifference here is practical, rather than philosophical. It means that men are too lazy, too much given to pleasure, or too much engrossed in secular affairs to be able to find time for religion. It is none the less deadly on that account, for it makes of the Christian name a mockery, and tends to destroy faith, even if it does not destroy it entirely.

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ST. A

In non-Catholic countries indifference is more reasoned and deliberate. Men discuss and defend it. They argue that, since all religions are equally good, it does not matter much which you adopt; and so, for lack of energy to make the choice, they adopt none at all. This also they defend on the ground that right moral conduct, on which all religions insist as of primary importance, is possible whether you go to church or not. God does not require to be worshipped, they will tell you: all He asks is that you be kind to your fellow men. There is no necessity to say prayers or to ask God's forgiveness for sin. You just do what is right, sometimes, at any rate; and, if you do what is wrong, you make a fresh start, and don't need to bother about the matter any further. It is an easy kind of religion this, and it appeals to men in consequence; but it is not Christianity.

§ 4. Most men regard prayer, and communion, and church-going as private matters which each one must decide for himself, and about which his neighbour has no right to pass uncharitable remarks. They are tolerant in thought as well as in act. But indifference sometimes develops into open hostility. Anti-Christian organisations on the Continent are powerful, and have been by no means unsuccessful in the war that they ceaselessly wage against Christianity. Of the rising generation that has been educated in the National Schools of France, a large proportion will know little about Christianity, except to its discredit. In England the spectacle of a low-class woman teaching little children that there is not a God, is fortunately for the present impossible. But there are societies, such as the R.P.A., established expressly for the purpose of destroying belief in God, and there is also an increasing number of writers of standing and influence who do not belong to these societies, but who none the less use their pens to criticise and attack the Christian faith.

Such writers are usually, like those of the R.P.A., conspicuous neither for their accuracy nor for their logic. They represent Christianity as at variance with the conclusions of modern scientific research; which it certainly is not, where there is question of established conclusions and not merely of dominant ideas. They assert that the creed of Christians was made universal by the aid of emperors, who for reasons of state preferred unanimity to diversity; in which assertion there is an element of truth, but that is all. They proclaim that the Bible, instead of being the written Word of God, is just the product of the disjointed efforts of a vast variety of human writers who wrote from human motives, made use of material derived from purely human sources, and expressed opinions that were either their own or were the opinions

of the age in which they lived; which statement is based on facts, but contains an inference that by no means follows from them. They attribute the doctrine of the Trinity to a futile attempt on the part of the fourth century Christians to reconcile the God of Christianity with the God of philosophy; forgetting that the New Testament already plainly teaches both three Persons *and* one God. What these critics of Christianity lack in accuracy and logic they make up for by wrapping carefully selected facts in brilliant rhetoric. Their arguments are plausible, and can be bought on any bookstall for a few pence. Therefore they are dangerous, and are doing considerable harm to the Christian cause by raising doubts in the minds of the badly instructed, and by furnishing the negligent with an additional excuse for their negligence.

§ 5. Nor is this the only kind of attack to which Christianity at present is subject. More than one attempt has already been made to found a new religion which shall take the place of one that is alleged long since to have proved itself a failure. These new religions for the most part are based on experience, abnormal by preference, but, failing that, normal experience. There is Spiritism, for instance, which is trying to reconstruct our knowledge of the other world upon data derived from ' mediums,' who pose as vehicles of communication between ourselves and disembodied spirits. There is Christian Science which, working by suggestion, ascribes to it unlimited power, and so hopes to regenerate the world by faith-healing. There is Theosophy which has made a hotch-potch of ancient beliefs, Christian, Buddhist, and pagan, on the principle of the survival of the bits that are fittest. Then there is Mr. Wells, who, having riddled the doctrine of the Trinity with ridicule and blasphemy, is seeking to replace it by a doctrine of his own. The true God, Mr. Wells assures us, is a ' Personal God,' whose existence is revealed by experience, yet whose nature ever eludes experience, and is impossible to describe or define; he is a ' Finite God,' the notion of which, by the way, is far more fraught with contradiction than is even Mr. Wells' conception of the Trinity; he is also ' an Invisible King,' who seeks to rule men without law, and to lead them whither he knows not, who is ever struggling with men to do something, but what that something is no one can say, since he never succeeds in doing it. Christianity must have come to a pretty pass when men can seriously propose for it such substitutes.

§ 6. Substitutes for Christianity, however, are, like saccharine, appreciated only by the few. Their significance lies rather in the need they express than in their power to satisfy it. They are the

outcome of a widespread feeling that the Christianity of to-day is not satisfactory. The cumulative effect of efforts to devise new religions, no less than that of the destructive criticism which permeates every form of modern literature—novels and newspaper articles, as well as monographs and reviews—is almost wholly negative. It does not elevate or inspire, but merely strengthens scepticism and intensifies disgust. If the modern world is ceasing to be Christian, it is at any rate not likely to become anything else.

Neither is the modern world likely to become violently antagonistic to Christianity, in spite of the vigour of rationalist propaganda. A man who doubts the existence of God, is not necessarily anti-religious: he may admit that religion does a considerable amount of good. Neither is a man who has ceased to call himself a Christian, necessarily anti-Christian or anti-clerical. On the contrary, he will probably acknowledge that, from the moral point of view, Christianity is highly beneficial, and though possessing but little esteem for the mentality of its clergy, may still admire their devotion. The chief enemy that Christians are called upon to fight is not Rationalism, nor yet any rival religion, but just simply sceptical indifference. Most men, even when they have but the vaguest conception of what Christ's Redemption means, will still call themselves Christians if asked to state their religion. They do not deny what Christ taught; neither do they believe it. They have just never made their minds up about it one way or the other, and, as religion has lost all interest for them, they have no intention of doing so.

§ 7. The Churches are by no means unaware of this deplorable state of affairs. Newspapers, especially in England, are continually reminding them of their empty pews, and the problem of how to combat the growth of indifference is constantly being discussed. It is suggested that 'the Churches' are to blame for it. Yet it must at any rate be admitted that there are other causes also at work. It is at least in part accounted for by the intensity of modern life and the multitudinous interests that fill it. The struggle for wealth has become far more keen than it used to be, and the methods that are used to attain it have become far more unscrupulous. Everybody is eager to better himself, both socially and economically, somehow or other. The world is also flooded with literature of every possible description and dealing with every conceivable topic. A thousand and one different subjects compete with Christianity in the market of human interest. There has also been a gigantic increase in facilities for travel and for obtaining amusement and pleasure; while the art of advertisement has been cultivated to such an extent that the attraction of this or that

play, or musical comedy, or picture-drama, or concert, is forced upon us, whether we will or no. If 'the Churches' are losing their grip, there is at any rate some excuse for them. Counter-attractions are great and lie beyond their control. Neither are 'the Churches' as yet so proficient in, or so given to, self-advertisement as is the commercial world.

§ 8. But when all has been said that can be said on behalf of Christian zeal and devotion, the fact remains that man has a soul, and that once upon a time he was aware of its existence, and was anxious to secure for it salvation. How comes it, then, that he has forgotten this fact, and has ceased to cultivate or to trouble about this function of his nature? To allege that modern man is too busy to find time for religion, or that he enjoys himself so much that he does not think about it, is not only incorrect, but it fails to take account of the fact that his indifference is only too often deliberate. When men say that they have no use for religion, and have found other things of greater moment to occupy their attention—business, science, social work, politics, war—they are not simply making excuses, but are stating a reasoned conviction. The love of God and the happiness of Heaven have ceased to appeal to them. They not only no longer believe in the Christian creed, nor appreciate its dogmas, but they dislike all creeds and dogmas, and definite religious beliefs. They will tell you that these things have proved not a blessing, but a curse; that they have led to nothing but differences, disputes, uncharitableness, persecution, sects. And in part they are right, though the inference that they draw from their facts may not be justified. If there is anything wrong with Christianity as at present preached, it is 'the Churches' that are to blame for it. They have quarrelled, criticised, and denied one another's doctrines for centuries, and, while claiming each to preach the same Christ, preach each of them a different Christianity. Is it any wonder that so many people have got tired of 'the Churches,' as they say, or that, finding they have neither time nor means at their disposal to decide between rival claims, should have given up the quest in despair?

Sectarianism is unquestionably to blame, and very largely to blame, for the indifference that prevails in English-speaking countries to-day. If Christ is one, why do the Churches each preach a different Christianity? Or if at bottom they really preach the same Christianity, which is by no means apparent, why are there so many Churches? Men see the difficulty clearly enough, but they cannot find the solution. Yet it is a difficulty that is ruining Christian faith, as it is bound to do; for, as Christ said, a kingdom that is divided against itself cannot possibly stand. Most men are not

brilliantly logical, but they have, at any rate, sufficient logic to realise that contradiction means error somewhere, and that the claims of two hundred different Churches cannot all be the claims of Christ. Under such circumstances can we blame men if they give up Christianity in despair? Are they not justified when they say to the Churches: It is not our business, but yours, to reconcile conflicting Christianities. When you have done that and have made up your mind as to what Christ really would have you teach us, then we will listen to you. But till that day dawns, good-bye to Christianity with its contradictory faiths and its unchristian squabbling.

§ 9. Another fruitful source of indifference, for which also sectarianism is responsible, is ignorance. More than a century ago the pioneers of the revival movement reported that they had discovered in England men who had not so much as heard of Jesus Christ. There are still men in England who know very little about Him, and have but the vaguest conception of fundamental Christian truths. Whose fault is that? Is it not that many of those whose duty it is to expound the truths that Christ has revealed have ceased to do so, anxious not to accentuate differences or fearful of giving offence? Is it not a fact that in many Churches no creed is ever recited or explained, no dogmatic sermon ever preached, no catechetical instruction ever given? Are there not many Christians, even ministers, who defend this on the ground that truth has many facets, that divergent views of Christianity are inevitable, and that to reconcile them is practically impossible? Are there not others that go further and have adopted the very principles by which indifference seeks to defend itself: that dogma is of little consequence, religion is a matter of choice, and that righteousness is all that concerns us? The promulgation of such views cannot tend to strengthen faith; it can only tend to destroy it. All Christians know that Christ claimed to be God, and at heart most practising Christians believe Him to be God; but how is the world to know this, unless the Churches boldly proclaim it, and explain what they mean by it? To urge that differences are merely facets of the same truth is futile, when it is obvious that in many cases they are flagrantly contradictory, and this even in matters of vital importance. No one can seriously claim that it is a matter of no consequence whether baptism be merely an optional rite by which a convert makes profession of his faith, or whether it is a sacrament that forgives original sin and confers on the soul sanctifying grace; or that it is the same thing to assert that the Mass is the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood, and to assert that it is a blasphemous fable. What is the use of shutting

one's eyes to facts? Everybody knows that Christians differ. He has only to count the number of different churches and chapels, or to consider the different names by which they call themselves. To ignore contradiction is not the way to get rid of it. Nor is silence likely to encourage men to believe in revealed truth, or to convince them of its value. Men will never believe that they have been 'washed in the Blood of the Lamb' until they know who the Lamb is, and what the washing signifies. Neither will England become Christian again, so long as catechetical instruction is excluded from our elementary schools, or so long as 'the Churches' shirk dogma.

2. *Christianity and the War.*

§ 10. Christian Churches being as divided as they are, and their methods so halting, it is hardly surprising that indifference and ignorance have grown apace; and this being so, it is clearly the business of 'the Churches,' and not of the people at large, to put the matter right. Yet, except for P.S.A.'s and other forms of light entertainment on Christian lines, which were instituted years ago in the vain hope of persuading the negligent multitude to give up their Sunday afternoon rambles and come to church, no serious measure of any kind had as yet been taken in England when, in 1914, the war broke out.

By this catastrophe the hopes of Christians were at once raised to the highest pitch. It was manifestly the judgment of God pronounced on a sinful world, which could not but recognise this and be converted thereby. There would be a revival, and the prestige of Christianity would be restored. Unfortunately, the Allies came to the unanimous conclusion that the war was caused, not by God, but by the desire of Pan-Germans to dominate the world. They were willing enough to recognise the unrighteousness of Germany, but they were by no means inclined to recognise their own. The first premise of the Christian argument, therefore, fell decidedly flat. Its value was appreciated only by those whose faith was already strong. Amongst the rest there was repentance for a time; but, like the growing wheat in the Gospel, it soon withered away under the scorching heat of munition work and a rapid rise in wages.

§ 11. Another main ground of Christian hope was also destined to prove unfruitful. It was thought that in face of death faith would revive. And so it has, where there was any faith to begin with, except in a few cases where men have been too proud in face of death to serve Him whom during their lives they have neglected, or in others where good intentions have vanished under pressure

of a non-religious atmosphere. But, unfortunately, there is very little sign of faith among the general run at any rate of British soldiers, whether officers, N.C.O.'s, or men. They are good fellows, excellent comrades, endowed with any amount of pluck and extraordinary staying power, ever cheerful under the most trying of circumstances, always ready to lend a helping hand to one in distress, or to offer their last cigarette to a wounded comrade. But religion is not their strong point. They doubtless believe in God in some sort of way, but they are not keen on worshipping Him; while for anyone to kneel down to say a prayer before turning in is a thing almost unheard of. Church parades are attended because there is trouble if anyone is absent. Y.M.C.A.'s are frequented because there is a canteen there, a recreation-room, and sometimes an entertainment. Voluntary services draw, if they happen to coincide with a fatigue. But one has only to talk with the men, to listen to their conversation, to live for a few months in an officers' mess, or to compare a voluntary service C. of E. with a church parade C. of E., to discover how little faith or real devotion to God there is among the men that compose our armies. On such men the prospect of a hereafter makes practically no impression. If they have been steady-going in life, they are steady-going when life is uncertain. If in normal times they are given to self-indulgence, they will indulge just as freely, and probably a little more freely, before a battle. The principle of most fighting men is that of the warriors of Juda: Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.[1] To do this 'bucks them up,' they say. And so it does; but it is a pity there is not a little Christianity as well.

§ 12. The chief effect that the war would seem to have had upon nominal Christians is that it has made them think a little more deeply and ask more questions. They will ask, for instance, how such a war as this has been, can be compatible with the existence of God, as tradition is supposed to represent Him. If God foresaw the war, why did He permit it, being at once omnipotent and the friend of mankind? True, there is no necessity to deny the existence of God in order to put the responsibility for the war where it really rests, on man; neither does such an answer solve the problem of evil. But thinking on deep problems is inclined to stop short like this, and to content itself with superficial criticism. Its effect is none the less disastrous for Christian faith, already hazy and hesitating.

The obvious justice of the Allied cause also gives rise to a difficulty. It is *so* obvious that it is impossible that God can

[1] Isaias xxii. 13.

fail to recognise it; yet, when things were going badly, one often heard the remark that God and the weather seemed to be perpetually fighting against us. Perhaps it was that the Allies, as such, never asked God's help, never thanked Him when things went well, never even mentioned His Name in official documents. Perhaps it was that, in the Army, religion is regarded as of third-rate importance, with the result that religious services are far more difficult to arrange than gum-boot parades or working parties, not because they are really more difficult, but simply because so many people regard them as a nuisance, and by no means as an aid to victory. Or, perhaps, it was that our weather prophets were less skilful than those of the enemy. Whatever the explanation may be, the opinion that God ought to have intervened to bring the war to a speedy end, has been frequently expressed, and His apparent lack of sympathy with human suffering has led many to question His existence. Again, the criticism is superficial, and implies lack of knowledge in matters both of philosophy, theology, and meteorology. To one who has been well instructed in Christian principles, and can give a reason for the faith that is in him, the problems of God's providence and of evil present no serious difficulty. But what chance has a man of learning anything of the deeper mysteries of his religion so long as Christianity is contradictory and dogma taboo? Where faith is weak, such problems present real difficulty. To him that hath shall be given, and to him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

§ 13. Another question that is often asked concerns chaplains: Why are there so many of them? In the British Army there are no less than sixteen *per* division, four for each infantry brigade, and four over. Usually they are attached to battalions; but there are not enough battalions to go round, and it is often difficult to find the fourth man a place. The remark is often made: 'We have no room; it is so and so's turn; we had the last man with us.' It is not that military men have any pronounced antipathy to chaplains, nor yet that chaplains unnecessarily obtrude themselves; it is simply that they are so numerous that they cannot but get in the way at times, both of combatant officers and of one another. What with Church of England, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, United Board, it is impossible either to find them all billets, or to find enough places of worship in a ruined village where there are only two large huts—the canteen and the Gaiety Theatre. As a consequence diversity of sect becomes a practical, as well as a theological, difficulty, as Army authorities must again and again have found it, and is thus brought home to the men at the front in a way that it never was before. British

Christianity, in fact, has got to the stage of that of the savages of Kikuyu; it is beginning to ask itself why, if we are all going to the same map-reference, we cannot all go there by the same broad road.

§ 14. Further questions are not infrequently asked as to what Christianity has done in the war. The Churches have collected funds to provide huts and other comforts for the troops. They have sent out workers to run them. They have denuded home missions to supply the Army with chaplains, many of whom have proved themselves men of sterling worth, who have risked their lives with heroic fortitude again and again, and at times have lost them, in the effort to succour the wounded or give the last sacraments to the dying. But what of the war itself? There is a widespread feeling that here, in humanity's hour of greatest suffering and need, Christianity has not been of much service. She professes to be at once a religion of peace and the religion of the civilised world, yet she was neither able to prevent the civilised world from going to war, nor, when that war developed into the greatest, the most terrible, and the most far-reaching disaster that has ever befallen the world, did any Christian Church, except the Pope's Church, make any attempt to put an end to this war of Christian nations, or any proposal or pronouncement likely to help in solving the problems that had led to it. Each National Church proclaimed the justice of its nation's war aims; each condemned the aims and methods of the enemy. But, in so doing, it did but follow the lead of the Government and the Press. In no case did it pronounce an independent judgment. Even the Irish Church in denouncing conscription, and the National Church of the Slavs in encouraging revolt against Austria, did but voice national aspirations and the judgment of their respective peoples. In regard to the great question of right and wrong, of justice or injustice, National Churches have followed, rather than led public opinion, and have in all cases left the initiative to press propaganda and government manifestos.

§ 15. Ample excuse may be found for this second-fiddle attitude of 'the Churches' in the fact that it has been practically impossible to learn anything about the war, its causes, its methods, its incidents, and purpose, except from a national press which the national government censored and controlled. Both clergy and people have been able to learn just as much about the war, and of the policies that have lain behind it, as their respective governments have chosen to reveal to them. Under such circumstances, to form an independent judgment is impossible. Each government has a right to the confidence and support of clergy and people until

such time as it stands convicted of incompetence, deceit, or flagrant injustice; and though, thanks largely to Christianity, the government of no civilised European nation could in these days count on the support of its people in a purely aggressive war, aggression may easily be made to appear as defence, injustice as justice. That is clearly what has happened in Germany and Austria, both in regard to war aims and in regard to the manner in which the war has been conducted by those powers. There are those, even in the British Army, who declare their conviction that it is legitimate in war, with a view to ending it quickly, to exterminate both civilians and soldiers, and by every conceivable means; but one can hardly suppose that whole Christian nations would consciously adopt a policy so utterly at variance with the faith they profess. Neither have they done so. *We* know that the Germans shelled open ports and bombed undefended towns, sunk our hospital ships, slaughtered our wounded, ill-treated our prisoners; but when the German Government assured its people that London was full of troops and military offices, that our open towns were forts, that our hospital ships carried munitions of war, that our wounded were not slaughtered, nor our prisoners ill-treated, what were the German people to believe? Somebody was lying; but would it have been either reasonable or right for them to have believed a foreigner and an enemy rather than their own rulers? And, even if atrocities were suspected, though not proven, would the German clergy and people have been bound in conscience, much as they might deplore such atrocities, to turn against their government and to refuse any longer to support a war which they believed, though wrongly, to be a just war waged in their own defence? A nation at war is like an angry man, apt to judge his own and his opponent's actions from a prejudiced standpoint. What to one nation appears to be, and may be in reality, aggression, injustice, cruelty, violation of law, to another, through ignorance or false information as to fact or motive or policy, may appear to be justifiable and praiseworthy. National Churches, no less than nations themselves, may be deceived in these matters. They cannot take the lead; neither can they form an independent judgment; for they must judge according to information received and policy declared, and the source of their information may be polluted, the policy as declared to them not what in reality it is.

§ 16. From the nature of the case only one Church could pronounce an independent opinion on the issues involved in the war, and only one Church attempted to do so. Both sides sent envoys to Rome at the beginning of the war; both sides sought her moral support; both sides complained when she did not do

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exactly as they desired. But what are the facts? The Church of Rome is not directly concerned in politics; it is not a supreme court of appeal before which nations can be brought to trial; it does not pronounce judgment on nations, nor on their governments, nor yet on their forms of government. Its primary duty as a Church whose bishop is also the head of the world-wide Catholic Church, is to preach and defend the faith of Christ and to care for all that pertains to it. It is concerned not with policies as such, nor yet with the question as to who is responsible for them, but with the principles that underlie policies in so far as they affect Christian faith, or hinder or promote the peace which Christ would see established. The Pope saw no less clearly than we see, the principle that had led to the war. It was the principle of the militarist, the principle that 'might is right.' That was why Leo had warned the world against militarism, and that was why Benedict insisted in his peace note that the first condition of peace should be that 'the moral force of right replace the material force of arms.' 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.' Everybody knew whose the policy was that was thus condemned twice over by papal authority, and it was certainly not that of the Allies.

§ 17. The Pope also spoke out more plainly than most people suppose in regard to German atrocities. He condemned the violation of Belgium's rights, the transportation of her people to labour on a foreign soil, and the bombing of open towns, where there were neither troops nor munitions. But atrocities are facts not principles. They must be established, not merely alleged, before they can be condemned. For this purpose the Allies even now are appointing a special commission which will hear the evidence on both sides. The Pope was not asked to appoint such a commission, neither was the case pleaded in the papal courts. He was asked to condemn Germany unheard, and he did not do so, except where facts were patent to all, or by implication in condemning her principles. Few people seem to have realised in England the full significance of the Pope's famous peace note, probably because they were possessed with the pre-conceived idea that he must be pro-German; and still fewer have realised how staunchly he has maintained throughout the cause of justice and peace. There are, however, exceptions. The opinion which Dr. Orchard, a London minister, expresses in his 'Outlook for Religion' is, at any rate, that of an unprejudiced witness. He writes:

> If we try to think what the general verdict upon the behaviour of ecclesiastics will be when the war is over, it is not beyond the bounds of probability that it will be recognised that the Pope was the only Church-leader who played a worthy part and has remained true to

Christian principles. And no one can doubt that the Pope has risked the prestige of the Papacy tremendously by taking this line, and that he must know it.[1]

§ 18. So far as their action *during* the war is concerned, then, but little fault can be found with any of the Churches. They have not done much: they could not do much, being so hopelessly divided; but they have done what they could according to their lights. Yet, sad as it is to have to admit the fact, the *tout ensemble* does not present a spectacle that is very creditable to Christianity. Surely, now that Christianity has been preached in Europe for nearly two thousand years, war on so gigantic and ghastly a scale ought to be impossible amongst peoples who profess to regard charity as the greatest of virtues, and brotherly love as alike the first-fruits of their faith and the sign of their pre-election. Yet here, in this twentieth century, is Christian Europe plunged in a war, than which there has never been any more inhuman, or more destructive of life and property, while the spiritual guides of Europe, with one exception, are content to look on, deploring the unchristian spirit which led to the war, pointing out that it has probably been permitted as a punishment for human infidelity, lamenting its existence, and condemning the spirit of cruelty and hatred that it has aroused; yet making no attempt, singly or conjointly, to bring about peace, or to solve the problems that, unsolved, mean its continuance. Is it a matter for surprise that men should sometimes be heard to question the value of Christianity?

3. *Christianity and the Labour Problem.*

§ 19. Nor is their failure in respect to the war the only charge that can be brought against 'the Churches.' Their failure in another respect is no less significant and tragic. A second war threatens us: capital *versus* labour, vested interests *versus* the claims of the artisan, the toiler, and the poor. There can be no question of the vastness of the issues at stake, nor yet that the working classes have much to complain of. Capitalists in the past have exploited labour in a most unscrupulous fashion. They have treated it as something to be bought and sold just like any other commodity, and have sought to purchase it at the lowest possible price, regardless of the just claim of the labourer to a wage that shall keep himself and his family in decency and reasonable comfort. During the war wages have gone up by leaps and bounds, and, in spite of a corresponding rise in prices, the

[1] Pp. 140, 141.

position of the working class has improved. They are afraid of losing their hard-earned gains, however, and they have reason to be afraid. While their fathers and brothers and kinsfolk have been sacrificing life and limb and health and sight without stint for the sake of their country, employers at home, already wealthy, have in too many cases been using the war as a means to add to their hoard. Labour is suspicious of capital, and justly so, for experience has taught her the bitter lesson of capital's utter unconcern for her rights and interests. There is danger ahead, danger, it may be, of revolution on Bolshevist lines, and it is a danger that has been growing for years. Pope Leo warned us of it long ago, as he warned us of the danger of militarism, and in more than one encyclical spoke strongly in defence of labour's just claims. But what of the Churches in general? Have they spoken out on the subject, pointing out labour's grievances, and warning us of the risk of neglecting to deal with and remedy them? Have they in any way, as Churches, befriended labour and defended her cause? There are Christian socialists, and there have been occasional sermons and spasmodic efforts on the part of individuals, but there has been no organised attempt on the part of the Churches to cope with the situation. Labour is aware of this fact, and, consequently, her attitude toward Christianity is distinctly cold. *Really* poor people, even in England, for the most part are either Catholics or nothing.

Why this apathy and lack of interest and effort? Has Christianity nothing to say as to the principles that ought to govern the relations of capital and labour? Have the socialist and labour member alone a brief to defend the rights of the poor and the oppressed? True, Christianity is not a theory of economics; but with many of its problems she certainly is, or ought to be, concerned. Are not stock-exchange transactions, financial speculations, markets, the conduct of landlords and the methods of millionaires, operations involving motives and principles that pertain to Christian morality? Yet what Church treats of them in her theology except the Catholic Church? Does not economic distress, and the exploitation of labour, often imply sin as well as injustice, and is not this the concern of every Church that preaches Christian truth? Had Christianity been preached as it ought to have been, the rights of labour upheld, and the cause of God's poor defended, there might have been no economic problem of magnitude to solve. But when capitalists and land-owners constitute the richest and most influential part of one's congregation, it takes a bold man to tell them that to sell goods for above their market value, or to create false values, is a sin against

justice ; that to pay one's workpeople any wage they can be induced to accept, is as bad as to pick their pockets ; that to enclose common lands, or to shut up a right of way, is to steal ; that tenants have rights and just expectations, and cannot be evicted at will ; that to become a ' bull ' or a ' bear ' on the stock exchange is to make oneself responsible for all the suffering and poverty that may result to other more simple and honest investors. Likewise, it takes courage to preach brotherly love to nations that are rivals, and still more so to nations at war.

§ 20. The reason why Christianity has failed to cope with the problem of labour, as she has failed to cope with that of indifference and with that of the war, is one and the same. She is divided. Faith and justice and brotherly love and peace have not been preached as they ought to have been, because, instead of there being one Church, there are many, each jealous of the other, each wrapped up in its own particular interests, each fearful of losing numbers by giving offence. It is courage, not conviction, that has mainly been wanting. Were there but one Christian Church, acknowledged alike by rich and poor, British-born and foreigner, Ally and Central Power, not only would Christian preachers be more outspoken in the cause of liberty, justice and truth, but the moral influence of such a Church would be so great that economic wars or war between Christian peoples at this stage of our history and civilisation would be practically impossible. Instead, because Christianity is not one, but is herself torn asunder with strife, she is constrained to stand passively by, while civil governments, some of which do not even profess to be Christian, are determining the fate of Europe, possibly on Christian lines, but in the name merely of common humanity.

§ 21. Contradiction, not creed, is the curse of Christianity. Sectarianism has undermined faith and hampered Christian effort ever since it was first introduced. No one existing is to blame for it ; and though there are those who think it may have been necessary at one time to prevent a greater evil, all recognise its disastrous effects. The world is crying out for someone to guide it, for someone who shall appeal to its seething masses, shall draw them, unite them, lift them out of themselves, for someone of outstanding excellence and attraction who, like Christ, promising peace and bringing peace, shall grip them and so induce them to solve their problems in the Christian and the gentler way. But who shall do this thing ? Not a sect ; for earnest, devoted, self-sacrificing, as a sect may be, its appeal is but to fragments of some particular people, or to some particular class. Not a National Church ; for National Churches are usually Erastian, swayed by

political, as well as Christian, motives, hand in glove not with the masses but with the State. Like the Jewish Church, National Churches appeal to men whose spirit and ideals are moulded by blood-relationship; their strength rests on racial ties, not on universal brotherhood; they have no message for the men of other nationalities, or for the world at large. The spirit of Christ transcends the limits of nationality. He came on earth not to convert Teutons only, or the English-speaking race, but the whole world. And the spirit of Christ should live on in His Church. His Church must of necessity be supra-national. Only thus can it fulfil its mission; only thus can it solve the problems of a weary and war-sick world. Diversity of creed, and of sect, is a protest against Christ Himself, a denial of His truth, a falsification of His promises, a betrayal of His trust. So long as it remains, Christian effort, Christian zeal, Christian propaganda must ever be hindered, frustrated and nullified by conflicting interests and claims. Christianity will regain her power only when the Churches are reunited.

It is unthinkable that Christianity should ever cease to exist. We have Christ's own assurance that this is impossible. Yet it is useless to shut one's eyes to the growing feeling of dissatisfaction that Christianity in its present state is arousing, or to the deep-rooted indifference that prevails, or to the unfavourable criticism that is becoming steadily more common and more outspoken. All this tells us far more plainly than words can do that either contradiction or Christianity must go. The world will tolerate errors, mistakes, abuses, infidelity, in moderation: it expects them, for it knows that Christians, and even Christian ministers, are only human beings. But it will not tolerate contradiction amongst those who profess to teach the same divine revelation and the same eternal truths. A host of warring sects each preaching a different Christianity is too great an absurdity to be tolerated for ever, even by illogical man. It has taken centuries for Christendom to realise this absurdity and to draw the obvious inference. But it has done so at last, and for that reason Christianity has never been so discredited as it is at the present moment, especially in countries where diversity is most pronounced. Things cannot go on as they are. Either the sects must perish, or they must reunite. Separated from, and at war with, one another, they are an object of scorn and ridicule alike to the intelligent pagan and to the intelligent thinker at home. Reunion alone can save them. Reunion alone can get rid of that contradiction which at present constitutes an insuperable barrier to the acceptance of Christian truth, alone can enable Christianity to stem with success the

growing tide of scepticism, rationalism, and indifference. Reunion alone can restore to the Churches that grip of the masses which to so large an extent they have lost; alone can enable them effectively to deal with the crying problems of the hour. Reunion alone can furnish missionary effort, so glorious in its aim, with that consistency and unity of organisation without which it must ever prove increasingly futile. Reunion alone can give to the scattered forces of Christianity that power which will enable her to influence governments and move whole nations, and so, by the inherent and compelling excellence of her ideal, constrain them to handle peace and war, capital and labour and poverty, in the Christian and the only reasonable way. To save the divided house of Christianity from yet further disaster, its servants, its members, its children, diverse as they are in blood and mind, must be brought to profess together the same faith, to worship together in the same Spirit, and to labour together in the self-same cause of Christ, their Saviour and Lord. Only in one great world-wide Church can Christ's ideal be realised and Christianity faithfully and effectively fulfil her mission on earth.

ESSAY II

THE TRIPLE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

'And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.'—JOHN xvii. 20, 21.

1. *Growth of the Desire for Reunion.*

§ 1. THE practical consequences of schism have been brought home to us only through the experience of centuries, but its relation to Christ's teaching has always been a matter which Christians have held to be of vital importance. That schism is repugnant to the spirit of Christianity is evident alike from the explicit words of Christ Himself, from the letters which His apostles wrote, every one of which condemns it in the strongest terms, from the emphatic and unanimous statements of early Christian writers, and from the constant tradition and action of the Christian Church in all ages. No sooner has schism appeared than it has been followed in almost every case by a movement toward reunion. It was so in the case of the early heresies. It was so in the case of the great schism of East and West. It was so at the time of the Reformation. No sooner had Protestantism begun to make headway than conference after conference was held and proposal after proposal made in the hope of reconciling the differences that had arisen. The Council of Trent was called together for this very purpose. Leibnitz sought to accomplish it: so also did Bossuet. Its possibility was discussed in England even so late as in the days of the Stuarts.

Unfortunately nothing came of any of these attempts at reunion. The distress which Christians felt at the rending of the Body of Christ was genuine enough, but it was more than counterbalanced by the conviction of each sect that it, and it alone, was in possession of the truth. Differences became accentuated, and diversity, instead of diminishing, was multiplied. Not indeed that differences were then held to be justifiable, but quite the reverse. The unity

Christ had spoken of as characteristic of His Church was not thought to be realised through differences. Each Church believed it to be realised in itself alone. Every other Church was in error, and for the most part was thought to be wilfully in error: its members must either be converted or damned. Hostility and mutual exclusiveness were the inevitable consequence. Schism was still regarded as a catastrophe; but the remedy for it was not reunion, but persecution. Since those days we have made a considerable advance, and it will be both interesting and instructive to trace that advance, since it has direct bearing on the problem of reunion.

§ 2. As we have already pointed out, persecution produced its own remedy, since by it Christians became convinced that those outside each particular fold were no less sincere than those within it. A more tolerant spirit resulted, first in practice, then in mental attitude also. Recognising that in other Churches there were many sincere and devoted Christians whose belief was at any rate more or less the same as that of their neighbours, individual churches for the most part ceased to regard themselves as exclusively the true Church, and, despairing either of converting their neighbours or of finding a basis on which they could unite with them, came to regard differences as inevitable, and so to look about for some way of reconciling them with Christ's teaching. The emphasis now was not on differences, nor yet on faith at all, but on righteousness. Where there was righteousness, there salvation was a realised fact, there was the Spirit of God actually working, and there consequently was the Church of God. As to how far salvation was a realised fact God alone could know. Therefore the Church was invisible. It was one Church, but no man could recognise it as a Church. This was the Nonconformist view, but even amongst Anglicans the idea of Christianity as a world-wide and realised fellowship had disappeared, and with it for the time being all hope of reunion. Differences were now acquiesced in, and tended to increase rather than to diminish. In the eighteenth and in the first half of the nineteenth centuries the process of disintegration went on apace both among the Presbyterians of Scotland and among the newly formed community of Wesleyans in England. Of desire for reunion there was scarcely a trace. It was enough that there should be 'unity of spirit,' and this was supposed to be realised already in the hearts of Christ's quarrelling brethren in spite of their differences!

In this, the second stage in the development of Protestant thought, there is in one sense an advance, for mutual hostility is giving place to mutual toleration; but in another sense there is retrogression, for, except amongst Anglicans, the concept of the Church as a visible fellowship and organisation has vanished. The

individual, conscious of his own righteousness, must content himself with the thought:

> Joined to the hidden Church unknown,
> Securely safe, I dwell alone.

§ 3. That the theory of an invisible Church should prevail for ever was impossible. It harmonises neither with the idea of Christianity as a Kingdom nor yet with the actual Kingdom that came into being with the preaching of Christ's apostles. Accordingly, in 1873 the Fernley lecture struck for Nonconformists a new note, at once more Christian, more Catholic, and more hopeful. Pointing out that Christianity is useless in an outward and visible world unless it have an outward and visible seal, it insisted that the Church must have visible unity as well as unity of spirit.

> There cannot be two Churches any more than there can be two Christs. Diversity and division were not part of Christ's plan; His Body should not be split up into rival and mutually repellent fragments. In the early Church unity was a fact and disunion an object of agonising deprecation. The actual state of the Christian Church, therefore, was not normal. Somehow it had fallen sick and got dislocated. As a consequence truth also had become invisible for lack of corporate oneness. Unity therefore must be restored, for after it all the Churches were groaning and grasping.

Then came a practical suggestion borrowed from Anglican divines. A distinction was made between fundamental truths, such as the Trinity, the Atonement, the Incarnation, Crucifixion, etc., which are 'essential to Christianity and to deny which is *ipso facto* excommunication,' and secondary truths, which are 'not essential and therefore should be no bar to unity.' In the fundamental truths all the Churches still believe. Therefore they should be one, and in reality are one, 'as a planetary system is one, each fragment, split from a larger orb, still revolving round its centre, Christ.'

This famous lecture marks the beginning of a new epoch in Nonconformist thought, which thus adopted a broader outlook, just as Anglican thought had adopted a broader outlook in the Oxford movement. The true significance of Christian unity was coming once again to be recognised. It must be a unity at once visible, real, and effective. Differences were no longer to be acquiesced in, but must somehow be overcome, for the Church of Christ should be a corporate body, a genuine society, a real communion of saints, and, as such, should be one, inwardly as well as outwardly, through the operation of the one Holy Spirit. Yet, if Anglicans and Nonconformists in truth be members of that Church,

it is manifestly not one. Hence the need of modifying somewhat the idea of the Church so that diversity may even yet be reconciled with unity, at least provisionally. This was effected amongst Anglicans by means of the branch theory, and amongst Free Churchmen by means of the planetary system of the Fernley lecture above referred to, a concept that was soon to give place to the more nebulous one of some sort of unity existing amid many and diverse communions.

§ 4. Neither of these views of Christian unity is particularly satisfactory. That Anglicans should claim that their Church is a branch of the Catholic Church, or that Nonconformists should define 'the Holy Catholic Church' as

> that Holy Society of believers in Christ Jesus which He founded, of which He is the only Head, and in which He dwells by His Spirit, so that, though made up of many communions, organised in various modes, and scattered throughout the world, it is yet one in Him,[1]

is not surprising, seeing that only by this means could they include their own communions in the Holy Catholic Church. But if branches, why separate, and, if a society or fellowship, why many communions? Surely the very idea of a branch implies that it should not be separate, but, on the contrary, should be inseparably united to the parent trunk from which its life is drawn—or, if it be the branch of an ocean, that it should not be cut off from the rest of the sea by beams and bars which hinder the passage of ships. Similarly, the idea of a holy society of believers implies that all members of that society should believe alike and, through their belief, should be united in one fellowship or communion. Some diversity is doubtless necessary, and even desirable, in a Church that is made up of many nations and scattered throughout the world. But diversity of practice, custom, and rite, all flowing from, and expressing, the same belief, is one thing: contradictory beliefs, or practices, customs, and rites that imply contradictory beliefs, or again organisations that do not even co-operate and communions that are mutually and on principle exclusive, are something quite different. If Christ, who is one, is for all Christians the Way, the Truth, and the Light; if He would have His brethren one even as He and the Father are one; if His Church is to be one Kingdom, one organisation, one body, one flock; if it is to acknowledge but one Lord, to profess but one faith, to admit all to membership by one and the self-same baptism; if its communion is to be truly a communion, and its branches really branches; then divergences of faith and of practice that are mutually incompatible, organisations

[1] *An Evangelical Free Church Catechism*, Q. 33.

that are radically different and in no sense combined in one, branches that are severed from the parent trunk or ocean, communions that are mutually exclusive, clearly cannot pertain to the realised Christian ideal. The branch theory and the Free Church definition of the Church are but descriptive of fact. One can hardly suppose that, in planting His vine, Christ intended that it should later on be subjected to so drastic a pruning, or that diverse communions and modes of organisation were part of His original design, destined, like the Church itself, to endure for ever. Even by Anglicans and Free Churchmen, compelled to recognise them as a fact, separated branches and exclusive communions can hardly be regarded as more than a passing phase, eventually to disappear as the ideal of Christian unity becomes more and more perfectly realised.

§ 5. The real significance and value of the branch theory and of the multiform communion theory lies not in their theoretical aspect, as attempts to explain diversity and somehow to reconcile it with unity in order to bring all existing Christian Churches within the fold of Christ, but in their practical aspect as expressing not content, but discontent, with things as they are and the desire to remedy them. Both theories by implication recognise that Christendom in its present state is not as Christ would have it to be, that so long as there are contradictory beliefs His faith must be somewhere or other denied; that so long as schism exists, His body is torn asunder. They correspond in the one case with a practical and sustained endeavour to make the Anglican Church more like the branch that it claims to be, and so to prepare the way for a reunion on Catholic lines; in the other with a widespread and growing endeavour to bring about a reunion of Evangelical Churches on the basis of that fundamental faith and earnest desire for righteousness that is common to them all. They indicate that yet a third stage has now been reached in the evolution of those Churches which the Reformation directly or indirectly has produced. First, differences were emphasised, then acquiesced in; now there is a desire to remove them. First there was hostility, then toleration; now there is an ever-growing spirit of fellowship. First the idea of a Holy Catholic Church disappeared, each Church, however minute, claiming to be exclusively the true Church; then it reappeared in the guise of an invisible Church in which all were united through righteousness; now, thanks mainly to a clearer appreciation of the teaching of Scripture and to a fuller knowledge of early Church history, it has reappeared in its original form, but as an ideal rather than a reality, as a unity to be desired and a fellowship to be sought for rather than as a unity and a fellowship actually existing and recognisable.

§ 6. It was in this stage in our history that the war found us. Already the Oxford movement had produced a most remarkable change in the belief and practice of the Anglican Church. Already a spirit of fellowship had sprung up amongst Evangelical Churches the like of which had never been known before. Already amongst Presbyterians and Wesleyans it had resulted in the healing of more than one schism. Already—a fact of even greater importance—the Evangelical Free Churches of England had united in one vast federation. And already there had been a *rapprochement* between the Free and the Established Churches both in England and Scotland. Long before the war, therefore, the process of disintegration had come to an end, and a movement toward reunion had begun. But it is the war, and the ideas that have grown up out of the war, that has stimulated the desire for reunion and made it so earnest, so practical, and so determined as to-day it unquestionably is. If a league of nations, why not a league of churches? If unity of command, unity of organisation, and unity of front amongst the allied armies, with victory as its consequence, why not unity of command, unity of organisation, and unity of front amongst the Churches in their war with scepticism and indifference? These are the suggestions that the war has made, the lessons that it has driven home.

But it has done more. Out here in France Anglican clergymen and Presbyterian and Nonconformist ministers frequently hold combined services. Australian troops have even been provided with a special form of service, designed to suit consciences either C. of E. (Church of England) or O.P.D. (other Protestant denominations). The Y.M.C.A. organisation is strictly undenominational: so also are the services held under its auspices on Sunday evenings. At home, clergymen who a century ago would scarce have recognised one another in the street, now exchange pulpits, meet on a common platform, co-operate in all manner of interests and societies, not strictly religious perhaps, but none the less closely connected with the cause of Christianity. In Scotland the work of Free Church ministers absent at the front has been carried on by their brethren of the Established Church, and *vice versa*; while the Moderator of the Church of Scotland has actually been found delivering a lecture in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral. Christian Churches are no longer enemies. They are fast becoming allies, and it remains only for a way to be found and they will become even more than that, as our armies have already become and our nations are even now becoming. However blind Christendom may have been in the past to the havoc that sectarianism has wrought at home and to the difficulties that it introduces into the mission field, it is fully alive

to the danger now. The significance of Christ's teaching on unity and of His apostles' insistence upon its necessity are now fully recognised by all Christians, as are also the consequences of ignoring it. Christians are quite aware that not only Christendom, but Christianity itself, is passing through one of the greatest, possibly the greatest, crisis in its long and varied history, and in consequence are redoubling their efforts to solve a problem which, unsolved, leaves us in a situation that is manifestly unchristian, and that, if suffered to continue, cannot but lead to further disaster.

2. *The Problem of Reunion between East and West.*

§ 7. Roughly speaking the Churches of Christendom may be said to be divided into three groups: (1) the Churches that are in communion with Rome, collectively styled, and until recently by common consent, the Catholic Church; (2) the Eastern Churches, most of them orthodox, but some still heretical at least in name; and (3) the Reformed Churches, i.e. those that broke with the Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation or later on broke with one another. In order to bring about complete reunion, therefore, three steps are necessary: (1) a reunion of the Reformed Churches amongst themselves; (2) reunion of the latter with the Church from which they broke away, and (3) the reunion of East and West. As, however, the schisms that gave rise to these different Churches took place at different periods, arose from different causes, and were very different in character, differences which have been impressed upon and are still retained by the Churches themselves, it will be well to discuss each problem separately, and as a preliminary to such discussion we must try to discover first what are the issues at stake.

§ 8. (*a*) *The Nestorian and Monophysite Churches.*—The earliest to arise of the schisms that have survived to this day in the East was that which originated in Nestorius, who became Bishop of Constantinople in 428. Nestorianism arose as a reaction against Arians, who were teaching that in Christ the Divine Nature took the place of a human soul or at least of some of its functions. Identifying in the concrete 'nature' (φύσις) with subsistent being (ὑπόστασις), Nestorius asserted that in Christ there were not merely two natures, but two hypostases, and hence inferred that Mary did not bring forth the Word of God, but merely the *temple* of the Godhead, and that the Incarnate Word did not suffer and die and rise again, but that God caused *him* to rise again in whom He had become Incarnate. The Council of Ephesus condemned

this heresy in 431, with the result that the eastern part of the patriarchate of Antioch fell away from the Church, and that ultimately Nestorianism was established as the national religion of the Christians of Persia and Malabar.

As a reaction against Nestorianism, which was Antiochene in origin, there arose in the patriarchate of Alexandria Monophysitism, which, again identifying in the concrete 'nature' with 'subsistent being,' argued that, since Christ is only one subsistent being, He must therefore be only one nature, though in that nature His divinity and humanity are conjoined. As a consequence Monophysites asserted that the *nature* of the Word became flesh, and denied that Christ is of the same nature with man; while some, later on, went so far as to infer from the triple personality of God also a triple nature in God, thus evolving a species of Tritheism. Monophysitism was condemned at Chalcedon in 451, with the result that in the patriarchates both of Alexandria and of Antioch schismatic Churches arose—the Coptic Churches of Egypt and Syria and the National Church of Armenia.

In both these cases the original promoters of the heresy did not wish to deny Catholic truth, but on the contrary to emphasise it. They did so, however, in an erroneous way, and in both cases the judgment of the Church in condemning them was confirmed by the strange doctrines to which their error later on led. On the other hand, though the Monophysite Churches still repudiate the Council of Chalcedon, and the Nestorian Church both Chalcedon and Ephesus, their liturgies and creeds are orthodox, and the original heresies and their dogmatic consequences have practically disappeared. In each case also there has already been a partial reunion with Rome. There are Coptic Uniates, Syriac Uniates, Armenian Uniates, and also Chaldean and Malabar Uniates, most of these reunions dating back several centuries. Each Uniate Church keeps her own liturgy and customs, but accepts the supremacy and doctrine of Rome, and with her is in full communion. The difficulty that stands in the way of a further reunion is mainly racial antipathy and past tradition, combined with a certain inertness and lack of interest which prevents the value of reunion from being duly appreciated.

§ 9. (*b*) *The Orthodox Eastern Churches.*—Up to the moment when the Photian Schism broke out in 852 the Eastern and Western branches of the Church Catholic were one in faith, in worship, and in polity. The Trinitarian theology of Greeks and Latins had developed more or less independently and along somewhat different lines, but all acknowledged the same councils and creeds, and were at one also in that part of the faith which as yet had not

been defined but was expressed in their *Lex Orandi*. Rites and languages were different; customs and ceremonies varied considerably; but everywhere was there offered to God the same supreme act of worship, the sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood; everywhere were administered the same seven 'mysteries,' or sacraments; everywhere did men venerate the 'all holy Mother of God,' invoke the saints, pay respect to their images, place relics on their altars, and pray for their brothers who rested in God. Each Church, too, had deacons, priests, and bishops, and was organised in dioceses, which were grouped under metropolitans, and these in turn under patriarchs. Each patriarchate in jurisdiction, rite, and custom, was for the most part independent; but each acknowledged in the Bishop of Rome a senior patriarch, the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, in whom lay a confirming power in respect to the decrees and canons of councils, to whom lay a right of appeal from other patriarchs in disputed points of orthodoxy or jurisdiction, and through whom Peter spoke, thus rendering the Roman see in a special sense the exponent and guardian of the faith of the whole Christian world.

§ 10. But there was also between East and West considerable friction, which steadily increased as Constantinople, beginning as a mere bishopric, gradually assumed patriarchal rights, first in Thrace, then in the Exarchates of Ephesus and Cæsarea (our Asia Minor). Finally, when the Patriarchates of Alexandria and Antioch had become dislocated by heresy and overrun by Islam, Constantinople became in reality what, as New Rome, she had long claimed to be, the second patriarchate in the Church. Throughout this long struggle the popes, faithful always to the traditions of the Church, had steadfastly defended the rights of the older patriarchates, and had refused to recognise either the claim of Constantinople, or the canons in which it was set forth. That was the chief cause of friction.

But there were others. Few of the Greeks spoke Latin, and still fewer Latins spoke Greek. Manners and modes of thought also were widely different. Then, with the disappearance of the Western Empire, the Emperor at Constantinople became the sole representative of the ancient imperial regime, and the sole claimant in Europe to the world-wide power of the Cæsars. His power in the West, however, was merely nominal, and in 800 the Roman Pontiff, recognising the logic of facts, consecrated for the West a new Emperor in the person of Charlemagne, King of the Franks. In reality the power of Charlemagne was far greater than that of the Greek Emperor, whose domains were already half conquered by the Saracens, and whose throne was ever being usurped.

But to the Greeks the new Emperor was simply a barbarian and an upstart, whom the Pope had foolishly encouraged.

Then there was the question of Illyricum (the western half of our Balkan States), a province which, though Greek in language and rite, had always formed part of the Latin patriarchate, but over which Constantinople was now claiming jurisdiction.

> Lastly [says Fortescue],[1] long before the great schism broke out, the Byzantine bishops had become accustomed to a number of schisms against Rome, each of which was indeed eventually healed up, but each of which helped to weaken their sense of the need of reunion. . . . This is the list: 55 years during the Arian troubles (343–398), 11 years because of St. John Chrysostom's deposition (404–415), 35 years during the Acacian schism (484–519), 41 years because of Monothelitism (640–681), 61 years because of Iconoclasm (726–787). Altogether 203 years out of 529. And in every one of these cases Constantinople was on the wrong or heretical side; in every one Eastern and Western Christians now agree that Rome was right.

Nevertheless the bond of union was thereby much weakened.

§ 11. This was how matters stood when, in 857, Ignatius, Patriarch of Constantinople, passed over the incestuous Bardas who had presented himself to receive communion. Ignatius was deposed by the Emperor, and Photius was consecrated in his stead by a bishop whom Ignatius had suspended. Both parties appealed to Rome, and when Rome gave judgment for Ignatius, the schism began. Faith also now began to grow diverse. Photius, to strengthen his cause, accused the Western Church of heresy, because it had inserted the *Filioque* in its Creed, and of Judaism, because it used unleavened bread and was accustomed to fast on Saturdays. In 867 Photius was deposed and Ignatius restored, and in 869 the Eighth General Council was held. But when Ignatius died in 877, Photius succeeded him and held another council, which reversed the acts of the latter. The schism was thus renewed and lasted till the death of Photius in 891. Then for one hundred and sixty years between East and West there was peace, which might have endured, in spite of an anti-Latin party among the Greeks, had not Cerularius, in 1053, for no apparent reason, written a treatise against the Latins, closed their churches, and struck the Pope's name off the diptychs. Eventually the other patriarchs followed suit, thus rendering the schism complete.

The Crusades did little to mend matters, especially when, in 1204, Constantinople was sacked and a short-lived Latin Empire set up. Yet in 1274 the Emperor sent to the Second Council of Lyons envoys who accepted its faith, though only to repudiate

[1] *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, p. 96.

it again later when no help came against the Turk. In 1439 a more important attempt to heal the schism was made at the Council of Florence, but though a formula of faith was agreed upon and accepted by all the Greek bishops save one, the attempt came to nothing in the end so far as the main body of the Eastern Church was concerned; for Constantinople fell in 1453, and in 1472 the reunion was formally repudiated by a Synod of Constantinople.

§ 12. During the 449 years that have elapsed since the last attempt to bring about reunion broke down, orthodox Christians have frequently fallen out amongst themselves, and, though nominally united under their Œcumenical Patriarch at Constantinople, the sixteen Churches of which their communion is made up are in organisation independent and separate. Protestantism they have repudiated and condemned in four different councils; but their hostility to Latins remains, and has found its way even into their symbolical books. Instead of minimising differences, they have emphasised them, so that now their faith differs from that of the Roman Church on several points.

These differences Fortescue summarises as follows:[1]

> They believe their communion to be the only true Church of Christ, and entirely reject the Pope's universal supremacy. They say that the Holy Ghost proceeds from God the Father alone, and are indignant that we add the Filioque to the Creed. About Transubstantiation there is no real difference, but they believe that that change takes place, not when the words of institution are said, but at the Invocation of the Holy Ghost (Epiclesis) which follows them in their liturgy. They deny Purgatory, but believe in what comes to the same thing, though they specially reject the idea of a cleansing fire; and since the Pope has defined our Lady's Immaculate Conception they deny this too. In spite of their boast of unchanging antiquity, their theology, rites, and Canon Law represent, not the first ages but a comparatively late development, that of the Byzantine Period. And they stay there, satisfying neither the need of continuous development that is a mark of the living Church, nor the rival ideal of unchanged primitive observance.

§ 13. On the other hand, the points in which the faith of East and West differs are small in comparison with that vast area in regard to which they are completely agreed. Both acknowledge the same Seven Councils and their Creeds, and both have the same sacrifice, the same sacraments, the same devotion to Christ in His Eucharistic Presence, the same veneration for His mother and the saints, the same love of mysticism, symbolism, asceticism,

[1] *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, p. 394.

and within their respective patriarchates both have the same organisation. Moreover, the outstanding differences that existed in the fifteenth century, the Filioque, papal supremacy, the nature of purgatory, and the moment of transubstantiation in the Mass, were fully discussed at the Council of Florence, and found to constitute no barrier to reunion. The Greeks preferred to keep their own tradition, but granted that Father and Son are a co-principle in the procession; which was all that mattered. Since then many points in the common faith have been further defined by the more progressive West; but with Trent at any rate the Greeks have no quarrel, and, though their theologians deny the Immaculate Conception, their Church celebrates it in her liturgy as 'the feast of the child-begetting of the Mother of God.'

§ 14. Even with papal claims the attitude of the Orthodox Churches is not wholly incompatible. They profess to possess in its entirety the faith of their forefathers in the days of the first Seven Councils, and papal supremacy in those days was attested alike by the fathers of their Church, by the councils and by her action in the matter of appeals. Papal infallibility also is implied by the fact that they acknowledge infallibility in the councils that the Pope approved, but do not claim it for the councils which their own Church has held alone since that time. Both doctrines also are contained in their liturgy. On April 13 they sing of Pope Martin as 'the glorious ruler of the Orthodox faith for all,' as 'the sacred chief of divine dogmas, unstained by error,' and again as 'the foundation of bishops, pillar of the Orthodox faith,' who 'didst adorn the divine see of Peter,' and 'from this divine rock didst guard the Church unmoved'; while of St. Gregory the Great they sing as 'Successor to the throne of the prince of the choir of disciples,' a 'torch of religion who dost light up the world with the glory of thy words,' a 'lighthouse who dost call back to the shore those who are tossed among the waves of error,' an 'instrument sounded by the breath of the Holy Ghost.'[1] Strange words surely for a Church which does not believe that there is a successor to St. Peter amongst the bishops, still less that he is any longer the Holy Ghost's instrument.

§ 15. Although, then, the Greeks made much of faith's differences, the real obstacle to reunion does not lie there, but in the intensity of racial and national antipathy, which the tradition and sufferings of centuries have maintained at the highest pitch. In the East nationality and religion are identified, and throughout the long struggle of its nations, whether with the tyrant at Constantinople or with one another, priest and people, nation and Church have

[1] Fortescue, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 57.

ever been one. To adopt any other religion but the national one is to become a foreigner; to change one's rite is equivalent to changing one's nationality. That is why the Government of Greece, to prevent the growth of the Uniate Church, has made a change of rite compulsory on all converts to Rome. Elsewhere—and there are Uniate Churches side by side with the Orthodox Churches everywhere except in Russia, where persecution has exterminated them—Uniates change neither their rite, their customs, nor their nationality, but simply profess on conversion principles of Orthodox faith which before were implicit and unconscious.

§ 16. What precise effect the war will have upon these Orthodox Eastern Churches it is too early to predict, though it cannot but be of great moment. The mainstay of the idea of the identity of the nation and the Church has all along been, on the one hand, the Turk, and on the other, the Czar, with both of whom this identity has ever been a fundamental principle. Now the Czar has gone and the power of the Turk is broken. The centuries of slavery which the Orthodox Church has endured with such indomitable patience at length are at an end. And curiously enough among the liberators have appeared those hated foreigners, the *Frengi*, whose aid in the early days of the struggle the Greeks invoked in vain. Had this happened at the time of the Council of Florence, the permanence of the reunion it brought about would have been assured. Yet it may not be too late even now, for, though the East moves slowly, its ideas are in process of transformation, its traditions must of necessity adapt themselves to the new circumstances, and the spirit of internationalism is everywhere spreading. In the war the shock that was needed to revive an interest in reunion would seem to have come, and with it an atmosphere that is likely to promote the desire of it.

3. *The Problem of a Catholic-Protestant Reunion.*

§ 17. It would seem to be agreed by all parties that the only possible basis upon which to establish reunion is community of faith, and that, without it, reunion is impossible. Dr. Hensley Henson calls this the 'evangelical principle of reunion,' but, in point of fact, it is a principle upon which Catholics also lay the supreme emphasis. Faith is, and always has been, for all Christians a pearl without price, for the sake of which all must be sacrificed, but which itself must be sacrificed for nothing at all. It was to preserve faith and to propagate it that the Christian Church was called into being and endowed with the Holy Ghost. To maintain

faith, and through faith righteousness, constitutes the main ground upon which each Christian body justifies its existence to-day. Without faith Christianity is meaningless. The first condition of reunion, therefore, must of necessity be that we should be agreed as to what faith is.

To the truth of this principle the reunions that have already taken place afford each of them striking witness. The various Uniate Churches that have been formed in the East have all of them been established on the basis of a full Catholic faith, which in each case was implicit, if not express, in the Church that was thus readmitted to the Roman communion. There have also been reunions among Protestant Churches. In Scotland the Secession and Relief Churches united in 1847 to form the United Presbyterian Church, and in 1900 the latter united with the Free Church of Scotland. In England the Wesleyan Methodist Association and the Reform (Bill) Churches, also Wesleyan, united in 1857; and in 1907 the United Methodist Free Church, thus formed, united with the Bible Christians and the Methodist New Connection. Similar reunions have taken place in America, Canada, and Australia, all of which were corporate reunions, i.e., the product was one Church, united in faith, worship and organisation. And in all these reunions the contracting parties, whether reuniting on the Catholic, Presbyterian, or Wesleyan levels, had previous to the reunion substantially the same faith and the same type of worship and organisation. There were slight differences, but either they were regarded by all parties as matters of small importance, or there was merely a difference of emphasis, certain points being regarded as of greater importance by some than by others. Even in regard to polity or organisation there was in all cases substantial unanimity.

From these data the inference would appear to be forced irresistibly upon us that reunion supposes that there should *already* exist between the reuniting Churches a common faith, a similar form of worship, and also a similar type of organisation, whether hierarchic, presbyterian, or connectional. Reunion, in other words, consists in bringing together into one organic whole units which in constitution are already the same, in the joining together in one body of a number of bodies, already structurally identical. Reunion completes the structure by giving it unity. Bodies which once were separate now become united under one head, be that head a conference, a general assembly, or a pope. But reunion does not *give* similarity of structure. *That* it supposes as a condition of its possibility, not only as regards faith and worship, but also in regard to polity, though the question of polity

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is less important than that of faith and is rightly subordinated to it.

§ 18. Now it is claimed, not without justice, that, in spite of our differences, there is a certain substratum of faith common to all Christian Churches. It is suggested, therefore, that we should reunite on this basis, taking as our symbol of faith the creed of Nicæa. The Nicene Creed is doubtless for none of us adequate as an expression of Christian faith. It is but a partial statement drawn up for a particular purpose. Of much of what Christians believe it says nothing at all. It says nothing, for instance, of the Bible, or of the nature of Christian revelation, the reason being, of course, that in those days these questions were taken for granted. Yet, then as now, all Christians had belief on these points as on others that are not mentioned, and a belief that was both definite and vital. The Nicene Creed, therefore, needs interpreting, and all Churches have, as a matter of fact, set upon it their own interpretations. But, though these interpretations differ, it is alleged that this does not matter, since on all fundamental points at any rate they are substantially in agreement, and for the sake of reunion the rest should be waived.

Had this proposal been made a few years ago, it is doubtful whether we should even have been found in agreement in regard to what are known as 'fundamentals,' and it may be questioned even now whether the agreement is more than superficial, for amongst non-Catholics the greatest variety of opinion prevails not on details only but also in regard to 'fundamentals.' Officially, however, i.e., as judged by official statements, we do seem to be more nearly in agreement than we were a hundred years ago.

§ 19. This somewhat remarkable fact is well illustrated by the *Evangelical Free Church Catechism*, a statement of Christian faith that was drawn up in 1898 by the English Free Churches, for the purpose of providing a manual for the instruction of children. This Catechism is of great significance from more than one point of view.

(i) *It is a definite statement of faith.* In it for the first time in history the common faith of some sixty million Nonconformists has been officially defined—a fact in itself sufficiently significant in days when dogma is discredited and definitions are practically taboo.

(ii) *It is a positive statement of faith.* From beginning to end there is not a single negative proposition except that of Q. 42, which asserts that there are *only* two sacraments, and the distinctive teachings of Catholic faith are nowhere denied except by implication or omission. This surely is also significant in view of

the peculiarly negative character of previous professions of Protestant faith.

(iii) *It is an orthodox statement of Christian faith* (so far as it goes, at any rate) in regard to more fundamental doctrines, such as Creation, the Divinity of Christ, the Redemption, the Trinity. The aim throughout has clearly been to state the maximum of faith common to the Evangelical Free Churches, and that maximum is surprisingly high. Not only are fundamental truths there, but also the doctrine of the Church as a visible brotherhood, united for the worship of God and the ministry of the Word and Sacraments (Q. 34). It is admitted, too, that sacraments '*convey*' grace to our hearts, when rightly used (Q. 41); that the Lord's Supper is not merely symbolic of Christian fellowship, but that it is 'given and received for a perpetual memorial of Christ's death' (Q. 45); and that in it 'we feed spiritually upon Christ as the nourishment of the soul' (Q. 47). The doctrine of Original Sin is also suggested by the dual statement, (*a*) that, 'although man was made innocent at the first, yet he fell into disobedience, and since then no one has been able in his own strength to keep God's law,' and (*b*) that sin 'separates man from God,' 'corrupts his nature,' and unless repented of, 'must issue in death eternal' (Q. 8, 9). When one studies the Free Church Catechism, one understands why Modernism attacks not only the Catholic Church, but all Christian Churches. Instead of seeking to adapt faith by reinterpreting it or whittling it away, the Free Church Catechism, so far as it goes, boldly asserts the old doctrines. From the Catholic point of view, it is of course lamentably unsatisfactory and incomplete, but it is not Protestant in the old sense. In fact the word Protestant does not occur in it from beginning to end.

(iv) *The Free Church Catechism has been drawn up by a committee of twenty of the leading representatives of eight different religious bodies, yet in its final form every question and every answer was agreed to without a dissentient vote* (Preface, p. 3); a fact that, as the Preface itself remarks, cannot but be regarded as 'profoundly significant and gladdening' when one remembers that it is the 'first combined statement of interdenominational belief that has ever been attempted, much less achieved' by the separated Churches, 'since the lamentable day when Martin Luther contended with Huldreich Zwingli.'

§ 20. Unfortunately, however, orthodox as it may be in the main, the Free Church Catechism from the Catholic point of view is sadly deficient. It errs by omission rather than by negation, but none the less it errs. For Catholics the 'forgiveness of sins' implies not merely the necessity of repentance to salvation, but

also the power of the Church to forgive sins—a power committed by Christ to His apostles, and by them to others, through the laying on of hands, and so by means of Apostolic Succession maintained in the Church unto this day, communicated by the Sacrament of Orders, and exercised by the Sacraments of Penance and Unction. They further believe that the Lord's Supper is not merely a Sacrament and a Memorial of Christ's Passion and Death, but that it is one with the Sacrifice on the Cross, a true sacrifice in which Christ is really present and really offers His Sacred Body and Blood for the remission of sins: a perpetual remembrance, indeed, of the Sacrifice on the Cross, but also a perpetual renewal and application of it, in which all who are present bodily or in spirit take part, as did those who were present on Calvary. The power to offer this Sacrifice, moreover, supposes in their belief, as does the power to forgive sins, continuity of Apostolic Succession and special grace, communicated by Christ to men, and by men to one another through the Sacrament of Orders in which the Holy Spirit still operates. Catholics also believe not merely in two, but in seven Sacraments—all of them by Christ's ordinance established (if not by Christ in person when on earth), since Christ and His Church are one. They believe, too, not only in a visible brotherhood, united for the worship of God and the ministry of the Word and the sacraments, but also in an invisible brotherhood, a communion of saints of which those that have died in the grace of God form part, so that we can communicate with them and they with us through prayer; those that are fully saints and in heaven interceding for us, and we asking their intercession; those that are not yet fit to behold God face to face, helped by our prayers as we are helped by theirs. All this for Catholics is implied by belief in a Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is a communion of saints, and in which resides the forgiveness of sins; but for Evangelical Christians, belief in a Holy Catholic Church, a communion of saints, and the forgiveness of sins does not imply this.

True, not all these doctrines are equally fundamental with those that concern the Nature of God and the Person and Atonement of Christ. But neither are all the doctrines equally fundamental which the Free Church Catechism sets forth as 'essential truths of Christianity.' For 'fundamental' is a relative term, though in practice its meaning is clear. For Catholics and Protestants alike it signifies those truths which in their respective beliefs are inseparably bound up with, and flow from, the first principles of Christian faith—truths which form an integral and essential part of what they believe to be Christ's revelation, are of vital

importance to Christian life, and cannot be denied without nullifying in part the purpose for which Christ became man. Catholics accept the evangelical principle of fundamental faith as the basis of reunion—do, in fact, insist upon it as the only possible basis. But they understand by fundamental faith more than do Evangelicals. Belief in Apostolic Succession, in the Sacrifice of the Mass, in the Real Presence and Transubstantiation, in Seven Sacraments, in the veneration and intercession of saints, and in Purgatory and prayers for the dead, is no less vital to, and fundamental in, Catholic faith than is belief in two sacraments, or belief in the efficacy of grace and the powerlessness of man without grace, vital to, and fundamental in, the faith of Evangelical Christians, and indeed in the faith of all Christians.

§ 21. Moreover, the attitude of Catholics in regard to the source and rule of their faith is as radically different from that of Protestants, as is their concept of faith's content. They do not accept the Bible as the sole source whence our knowledge of Christ's revelation may be derived, for to them it does not seem to have been written for this purpose, nor is its teaching on all points clear. Catholics believe in the Bible, but the primary source and ultimate foundation of their faith is a living tradition, which expresses itself under the guidance of the Holy Ghost in an *Ecclesia docens*, of which bishops are the primary representatives and interpreters, as the apostles were the primary representatives and interpreters of the primitive *Ecclesia docens*.

It is this difference in regard to the 'rule of faith' that has led Dr. Hensley Henson to assert that Catholics would base reunion not on faith but on polity. He is wrong. Polity, for Catholics also, is but a means to an end. But as the end has been revealed—righteousness through truth, so also may the means have been revealed either in Scripture or through the Holy Ghost manifesting itself in the Church's development. If so, then polity at least in broad outline is of faith, and fundamentally of faith, if it be the means whereby God preserves faith. So Catholics believe. Polity, therefore, to them is vital, but it is vital only because, and in so far as, it pertains to faith. 'Mere political unity is worthless,' as the learned bishop rightly remarks. The honest acceptance of faith as the basis of reunion is bound upon all Christians 'by every consideration of reason, of conscience and of history,' but it must be the faith that Christ bequeathed to us, faith unmutilated, whole and entire.

§ 22. Whence, since faith differs, for a Catholic-Protestant reunion there is plainly for the moment an impasse. The Nicene Creed to the Catholic Church cannot be satisfactory as a basis of

reunion, because her interpretation of that creed contains much more than does the interpretation which more modern Churches put upon it; and in this matter, recognising her own interpretation to be infallible, she does not and cannot allow that unlimited latitude which they allow. Did the Christians of other Churches believe as she believes, and in their Confession profess nothing to the contrary, the way to reunion would be open; for it is in faith only that the Catholic Church is intransigent and irreformable. But it is only too evident that they do not as yet believe as she believes, but that, on the contrary, by implication if not expressly, they deny much of the faith which she believes to have been delivered by Christ into her keeping that she might preach it to the world. So believing, to consent to reunion on the basis of a less complete faith would be to belie her function and to be false to her trust, which no Christian would ask of her or desire.

§ 23. Were this all that there is to be said on the question of faith, to proceed further in the discussion of a Catholic-Protestant reunion would be futile. But it is not. There are evident signs of an awakening of Catholic faith among those who belong to non-Catholic Churches. For centuries Catholics have been praying for the conversion of England—they are praying for it still, not in England only, but elsewhere, daily at the shrine of our Lady at Lourdes—and it looks as if the Author of Faith were beginning to answer those prayers—not perhaps in quite the way we expected. He seldom does that. But in His own way. Not by conversions only, numerous as they are, but also by that movement which has already brought back half the Anglican Church to Catholic faith, and stranger still by a like movement amongst Nonconformists, young as yet, but rapidly developing. To us who are within the fold, this faith that is springing up around us appears as in a mirror distorted. But so, surely, it must be at first, arising as it does in Churches that have so long been separated from Catholic unity, hostile to Catholic teaching, and strangers to Catholic tradition. Yet the aim is manifestly good. The zeal, devotion, energy, expended so unsparingly, so courageously and so persistently in spite of wellnigh insuperable obstacles, is plainly of God. While the remarkable success that is attending this generous effort can hardly be regarded by Catholics as other than providential. Nor is it merely amongst those who are taking part in these movements that their effect is manifest, but amongst those also who as yet hold aloof. As external aids to devotion were the first to go at the time of the Protestant Reformation, so they have been the first to come back. Stained glass windows, ornaments, organs, altar-like tables, crosses, blessings, have found their way even into

the most severe of Protestant communions. Chapels are fast becoming churches, while outside the churches have reappeared processions and clerical dress. Faith also amongst Protestants is less anti-Catholic than it was. The repudiation of Catholic doctrine is no longer the fundamental article of their faith. Instead of asserting what they disbelieve, they are content now to assert what all of us believe in common. The Protestant element in Protestantism is disappearing, and with it the term Protestant itself.

§ 24. Nor yet again is it merely Catholicism as an ideal that attracts. The Catholic Church as a realised fact also makes an appeal to the hearts of men such as she has never made before, since the days when schism sought to destroy her. She attracts men; and that by those very marks which we, Catholics, believe, were implanted within her by the Spirit for this purpose: attracts by her wonderful unity, which maintains itself in spite of the utmost diversity of politics and race; attracts by her indisputable continuity with the Church of apostolic days, whose faith and order, elsewhere questioned and denied, she has ever retained whole and intact; attracts by her genuine Catholicity, for she is literally world-wide, everywhere offers her one, pure sacrifice, everywhere appeals by the mute yet inspiring beauty of her churches, where the Real Presence dwells, giving to them that intimacy and peace, that homeliness and comfort, which God's presence alone can give. She attracts also by her holiness, which manifests itself at once in a stern condemnation of sin and of the principles that lead to sin; is fostered by the sacramental grace which she persistently offers at all periods of man's life as an antidote to sin; is encouraged by external means which others now are borrowing—ritual, art, retreats, orders and confraternities, devotional works, treatises on morality, asceticism and the spiritual life; and expresses itself in that vast variety of ways and works and institutions, with which everyone is now familiar, if not from the inside, at least from without.

That is how the matter stands at present. There is still a vast amount of prejudice against the Catholic Church and a still more vast amount of ignorance and misunderstanding in regard to her faith. But it is not to be compared with what it was a hundred or even fifty years ago. The chief obstacle now is practical rather than theoretical, and pertains to the faults that belong inevitably to all that man has to do with, rather than to the inherent character of the Church as a divine institution.

§ 25. The attitude of thinking non-Romans toward the Church of Rome is aptly described by Dr. Orchard, himself once a Free

Churchman, but now a 'Free Catholic,' though by no means a Roman:

> The old attractions and the old repulsions still remain. There is her great antiquity, which, whether it goes back to St. Peter or not, does go back to the primitive Church which shed its blood in streams for centuries to gain for us religious freedom. There is her wonderful fidelity to the faith. Rome may have added to and corrupted the faith; she has never come near denying or surrendering it. She retains in her worship the note of mystery; he is a poor Christian to whom the Mass makes no appeal with its unbroken representation of the sacrifice of Calvary offered every day on countless altars through all the changing centuries unchanged. It is the Church of the Saints: Augustine, Francis, Catherine; the Church of the mystics: Julian, Thomas à Kempis, John of the Cross; it was the spiritual home of Dante, Pascal, Newman; if she has sometimes persecuted her sons, none but she could have borne them: Abelard, Savonarola, Luther; a Christian must want some inheritance in a Church like that. And even if it prescribes the form somewhat rigidly, it keeps alive a passionate devotion; if it has surrounded the figure of Christ with a crowd of saints that seem to us to stand too near Him and dispute our adoration, Jesus Christ and Him crucified is the living heart of its religion, and it has never doubted that He should be worshipped. With all its call to an asceticism that some would judge out of place in genuine Christianity, with all its theological rigidity and imperial pride, it keeps a large heart for common humanity, and is the last Church in the West to retain the poor. One would consent to tramp many tortuous paths to come at the living founts they lead to, submit to many disagreeable things where it offers so much that is food for the hungry soul, put up with the rough iron-bound casket for the sake of the jewel it contains.
>
> But one has to weigh against this the history of cruelty and intolerance, the stubbornness and blindness, the scandalous lives of many who were vowed to holiness and of more who were admitted to the highest place. One has to consider the exclusive priesthood, the excommunicating spirit, the claims of the Papacy, the gross mixture of doctrine that has to be accepted as a whole simply because the Church teaches it. Above all there is the military spirit which has crushed many a fine soul, the legal bondage that cramps the intellect, the intrigue that has disillusioned the honest, and the spy system that has broken many a heart. It resolves itself into a struggle of the heart against the head, the past against the future, food or liberty; and whichever way one decides, it divides a man against himself.[1]

§ 26. What a strange, yet fascinating picture! What a marvellous blending of ugliness with beauty, of human narrowness with sublime, yet realised, ideal! It is almost as if some artist had painted a glorious portrait which some puny imp had after-

[1] Orchard, *The Outlook for Religion*, pp. 137, 138.

wards covered with smudges. Yet the smudges, though fading perhaps, are none the less real, and form an integral part of the picture. 'Twere pity to destroy by analysis a portrait that seems to be so life-like. Rather let us assume that it is a portrait, and seek to explain it as it stands.

Though the picture which Dr. Orchard has drawn for us of a surety drives a man two ways, of most dilemmas there is usually a solution. Whence, then, does this one arise? If the Church is so hateful a persecutor, so fond of intrigue, so stubborn and so blind, how is it that she inspires such loyalty and is so beloved? If her forms are so rigid, her spirit so legal, her doctrines so gross, how comes it that she has retained such a passionate devotion to Christ and His Cross? If her priesthood is so exclusive, her regime so military, her discipline so harsh and inhuman, by what extraordinary chance does it come about that she is the last Church in the West to retain God's poor? An institution whose character is so repulsive and whose methods so unscrupulous, whose history is so blood-stained and whose spirit so unchristian, ought long ago to have disappeared. Yet she has not disappeared, but has survived the countless revolutions that have taken place around her, and lives to-day, her devotion unimpaired, her worship unaltered, her faith intact, in spite of every effort that the powers of evil, internal and external, moral and civil, have been making for two thousand years to destroy her. It is suggested that God first implanted His image in the Church, and then deserted her, leaving it to man to disfigure and mutilate that image at will. But this cannot be. It is neither compatible with God's wisdom and providence, nor does it account for the fact that His image is still there. If there be not a divine as well as a human principle at work in the Church, whence this wonderful survival of what error, sin, corruption, decay, have so persistently sought to eradicate? Why have the forces of evil never prevailed against her, whereas less potent forces at war with other societies have prevailed again and again? Why has virtue been always triumphant and faith never failed?

§ 27. That is the problem which the Catholic Church, as a concrete reality, presents to the world of to-day. Some see the answer, others do not. Yet it is surely there in history. The Protestant reunionist complains that ' with Rome, as she is, reunion would not be healthful.' What is it that scandalises him? Unrighteousness? If so, let him study the history of unrighteousness and ask whence it arises, and whence the remedy that is so constantly provided. Is it intransigence and dogmatism that repels him? Then let him seek in history the cause of Rome's stead-

fastness in the faith and the root of Protestant diversity. For Churches to reunite whose creeds are different is impossible. Only when faith has become common will reunion enter the bounds of possibility. But the clue to both the problem of faith and the problem of righteousness is there in history, if only we would seek till we find it.

4. *The Problem of Home Reunion.*

§ 28. The problem of reunion between the Reformed Churches of English-speaking countries is at the present moment by far the most pressing, for naturally where diversity is most manifest, the need of reunion is most acutely felt. Now that the visibility of the Christian Church has become once again recognised, it has become wellnigh impossible for Protestants to reconcile the multitudinous diversity of their Churches with the well-defined marks of Christ's Church. Diversity also is disastrous, and it is amongst Protestants that it is mainly to be found. Moreover, the schisms that were the last to come into being should be the easiest to heal, especially as in many cases faith was hardly in question That movement which at present is seeking to unite Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Nonconformists throughout the British Empire and America in one great English-speaking Church looks also to a further reunion which shall ultimately bring all Christians together in one great world-wide Church ; but, if the spirit of fellowship that has now arisen between different Churches be not strong enough to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of a Protestant reunion, it will certainly not be strong enough to overcome the far more formidable obstacles that stand in the way of reunion all round. The realisation of the Evangelical ideal of an English-speaking Church, say those who are seeking to promote it, should be but a stepping-stone to a wider reunion still ; but the stepping-stone must come first, if by means of it one is ever to attain to that other ideal which, however glorious, is plainly much more remote.

The first question to ask, here as elsewhere, is whether the faith-basis for reunion exists. Polity is manifestly diverse.

§ 29. From the historical point of view the chief Churches concerned in this project are (1) the Established Church of England, together with the Episcopalian Church of Scotland, which it recognises as a sister Church and with which it is in full communion, (2) the Established (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland, (3) the United Free Church of Scotland, and (4) that group of congregations and churches which in England have united to form the Free

Church Federation. It is the reunion of these Churches that constitutes what is known as the 'home' problem, and it is here that the main problem lies. Colonial Churches and the Churches of America are to be included. Indeed, the project there is far more advanced than it is at home. But in Australasia, South Africa, Canada, and America, men are less conservative and less wedded to tradition than we are in the old countries. They have also had less experience of the spirit of rivalry and intolerance, to which our difficulties are in large part due. If, then, the problem of an Evangelical reunion can be solved for the mother Churches of England and Scotland, *a fortiori* it can be solved for daughter Churches, which, though possibly more diverse, are far less estranged one from another.

§ 30. Now the one outstanding fact with regard to all these Churches, whether English, Scottish, Colonial or American, is that they owe their independence and to some extent their faith to the Protestant Reformation. There are differences, doubtless—some reformers went farther than others—but there is also a vast similarity: all are reformed Churches, and all have been reformed on Protestant lines. All have been agreed, therefore, from the outset in repudiating the main characteristics that are peculiar to Catholic faith, and still are agreed at least in omitting it from all their official statements and confessions.

This simplifies the matter considerably so far as the faith problem is concerned. There have been many schisms amongst Protestants, and in some of them faith was involved; but it was seldom the chief ground of schism, and in many cases had nothing whatsoever to do with it. Even the Puritans accepted in broad outline the faith of the Prayer Book and Thirty-nine Articles. What they sought mainly was the reform of discipline and of a number of abuses in the matter of discipline. Popery had already been abolished; what they wanted was to get rid also of its 'rags.' When the split came, episcopacy also disappeared, and with it respect for 'order' and sacraments, but it is doubtful whether at the time respect for order and sacraments was very much higher even in the Anglican communion. The seceders were also inclined to Calvinism, but so for that matter were many Anglicans; and in any case Calvinism has long since disappeared. The Wesleyan secession also was only remotely connected with faith. So, too, were the secessions from Wesleyanism itself. The tendency in all these secessions was anti-sacramental and anti-sacerdotal; but in the main it was liberty for righteousness, not liberty for faith, that was sought. And in any case, no one now can accuse the Anglican Church of being intransigent in the matter of belief,

nor could one wish for greater latitude in this respect than is to be obtained within her fold.

Nor was faith seriously involved in the secessions from Established Presbyterianism in Scotland. Originally the secession Churches were more rigorous in their Calvinism than was the Church from which they separated; but the attitude of all Presbyterians in this respect has changed. In 1879 the United Presbyterian Church appended to the Westminster Confession a Declaratory Statement which was tantamount to a denial of its teaching in regard to predestination, and in 1892 the Free Church modified its doctrine in the same spirit and by the same means. So far from constituting an obstacle to reunion with the Established Church, however, this change of attitude on the part of the Free Churches is rather an advantage, since the prevailing doctrine of the former has long since ceased to be strongly Calvinistic. In fact, as in the sister Establishment in England, the views of most of its members are distinctly latitudinarian.

§ 31. So far then as faith is concerned, the proposals of the Lambeth Quadrilateral would seem to afford both for Presbyterians and for English Free Churchmen a satisfactory basis for reunion. They have always regarded 'the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testament as containing all things necessary to salvation and as being the ultimate rule and standard of faith.' It is, in fact, the cardinal principle of Protestantism, and is characteristic of all the Reformed Churches. They also acknowledge 'the Apostles' Creed as the Baptismal Symbol,' and would doubtless be willing for purposes of reunion to acknowledge 'the Nicene Creed as a sufficient statement of the Christian faith.' Both the Westminster Confession and the Free Church Catechism and Declaratory Statement go much further than this; but the Westminster Confession has been considerably modified, as we have seen; and the Free Church Catechism and Declaratory Statement contain rather the maximum than the minimum of faith that is common to the Churches that have published them. They are, moreover, merely declaratory statements; and besides, so far as they go, are substantially orthodox, and quite consistent, except in the matter of order, with the faith of other Reformed Churches. The third term of the Quadrilateral is also likely to prove acceptable. All the Churches concerned retain 'the two sacraments ordained by Christ Himself—Baptism and the Lord's Supper'; and most 'minister them with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by Him.'

§ 32. The main difficulty alike from the point of view of Presbyterians and from that of Free Churchmen lies in the fourth

term of the Quadrilateral, which proposes as the polity of the reunited Church ' the Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.' Anglicans of all shades of belief are devoted to the episcopal system, and are loath to surrender it, especially as it constitutes the main link between themselves and the older Churches, and affords the chief ground of hope for further reunion. Presbyterians, on the other hand, and still more so Free Churchmen, are by tradition and by temperament hostile to episcopacy. The Presbyterians renounced it once and for all at the time of the Covenant, and against its re-introduction fought with the utmost tenacity and at the cost of much blood. The Free Churches renounced it when they became free churches, and have maintained their opposition to it in spite of numerous and heavy disabilities, both social and civil. It will be a very powerful appeal that will be sufficient to overcome the antagonism of centuries.

With episcopacy also is bound up the question of orders, and to some extent that of a liturgy. True, the terms of the Lambeth Conference do not require the adoption of any view as to the character of the historical episcopate, nor do they so much as mention the question of orders. A representative committee of Anglicans and Free Churchmen has even gone so far as to suggest that the acceptance of any theory as to the origin and nature of episcopacy is unnecessary as a condition of reunion. Yet the difficulty remains. The problem of reordination has sooner or later to be faced, and episcopacy, even as a polity, is highly unpalatable both to the Presbyterian and to the Free Churchman.

§ 33. The latter, in fact, would seem to object to any form of reunion which would involve the adoption of a central government and so destroy the independence of the individual congregation. In the Free Church Federation the machinery of a central government already exists, awaiting only the moment when those who elect it shall endow it with legislative and administrative authority to make of that Federation one Church. The primary condition of reunion also exists. Twice over in late years have the Free Churches succeeded in drawing up a profession of the faith that is common to them all. There is also a vast similarity in their worship. So alike are their services, and so similar the discourses that are delivered in their pulpits, that it would be difficult for a stranger to tell to which particular chapel he had come if it were not for the notice-board outside. All the conditions necessary and requisite for corporate reunion amongst the Free Churches themselves would seem to obtain. Yet corporate reunion

has not eventuated. On the contrary, by the Mansfield Conference in 1916 it has been definitely turned down.

This fact, taken in conjunction with the undoubted benefits that have accrued to the Free Churches on account of their Federation, has led many to substitute the idea of federation for that of corporate reunion in respect to Christendom at large. We live in an age of substitutes, and religion apparently is to conform to the spirit of the age.

§ 34. The suggestion of a federation of the Churches is not an ideal that will appeal to most Christians, whether viewed from a practical or from a theoretical standpoint. It is not a Christian, but a human and political ideal, frankly based on the model of the British Empire or the United States of America.[1] True, there were *many* Churches even in apostolic times, but these Churches were also one, and that not merely by a common faith, a common worship, a common form of polity, and a common origin, but also as one organic society with the apostles at its head. Those who ruled the Churches in apostolic days would brook no contradiction. In them and in the conference at Jerusalem all recognised a living authority that was equal to, in fact was, that of God's own word. Local churches in those days were not federated: they expressed but one idea, acknowledged but one authority, and were integral parts of one and the self-same whole. 'Unity properly applies,' says Mr. Shakespeare, 'to that which may be regarded as a single body in which the several parts are under one control, *or* animated by one life, *or* working together in harmony.'[2] He should have said 'in which the several parts are under one control *and* animated by one life *and* working together in harmony.' For the unity that is attained merely by working together in harmony is not that of a living body, such as the Christian Church ought to be, nor yet that of an organism, such as the early Church actually was. A living body or organism not only implies that 'the life blood flows freely and that every member is in living relation with every other,' but connotes also a dominating principle or soul which forms it from the beginning and throughout life controls all its operations.

§ 35. From the practical standpoint also the federal project is not likely to prove a startling success, even granted that it be possible to realise it. It will not get rid of the scandal of contradiction, nor yet of that waste of energy which arises from 'overlapping.' There will still be in the same district, and sometimes in the same street, six or seven different chapels, each announcing six or seven different forms of Christianity, and the six or seven

[1] Cf. *The Churches at the Cross-roads*, pp. 121–123.
[2] *Op cit.*, p. 103. Italics mine.

ministers that occupy their pulpits will still be free to interpret the Gospel as they please, so long as they carry their congregations with them. The very essence of the Free Church Federation is that no faith should be imposed, and that each church and each congregation should remain at liberty to act as it thinks fit in the matter alike of belief, of worship, of organisation, and of the administration of the sacraments. Between such a Federation and the British Empire there is doubtless a similarity, and it cannot be denied that federations do good. But as Christians we are warriors, engaged in endless conflict with the powers of darkness and of sin. It is from war, not from peace, that we should learn the lesson of how to organise. And that lesson is obvious. The allied nations became federated in the cause of democratic freedom, and in proportion as their belief in the justice of that cause grew stronger they became better allies and were able to sink to some extent those particular interests which had moved them at the outset. But it was not until they had sunk them altogether and placed their forces under one supreme command that victory became assured. Love of the free church principle is deeply imbedded in the hearts and traditions of our Nonconformist brethren, as is the love of his own people in that of every nationalist, but if the ideal of Christ is to be realised and His cause to be made a success, the views alike of nationalist and of Free Churchman must be transcended, and even, it may be, sacrificed, for the sake of a higher end.

§ 36. Thus far we have considered the project of an evangelical reunion from the point of view of Presbyterians and Free Churchmen; we must now consider it from the Anglican point of view. A serious difficulty at once confronts us. Anglicanism in the concrete is ambiguous. In some Anglican churches there is holy water ready for you at the door, a gorgeous altar confronts you, complete with tabernacle, crucifix, candlesticks and lamps; confessionals await you at the side. Should you ask for *Mr.* So-and-so, you will be promptly told that you mean *Father* So-and-so. Should you wait for a service, you will discover that you are assisting at what seems to be a Mass in English. Except for the Latin, everything seems to be complete: vestments, ceremonies, altar boys in red, elevation, genuflections, communion administered from a ciborium reserved in the tabernacle. To follow such a service in the Book of Common Prayer is impossible; what you need is a Missal. The notices and sermon also will puzzle you. You will probably be asked to pray for the souls of the faithful departed, and may possibly learn that Evening Prayer will be followed by Benediction. The sermon may be on Anglican Orders,

or again on our Lady or the Blessed Sacrament. If this is Anglicanism, you say, then surely the wonder is not that it calls itself Catholic, but that it refuses to call itself Roman.

Next Sunday you visit another Anglican church a few streets distant. In it you discover no holy water, no confessionals, no tabernacle, no crucifix. The communion-table is adorned merely by an upraised alms-dish. No vestments are used, save surplice and stole. There is no suggestion of a Mass or of the Blessed Sacrament, no announcement of forthcoming Benedictions. The service is simple, just Morning Prayer and a Litany, followed, it may be, though somewhat late in the day, by the Lord's Supper. The latter is celebrated now, however, not in the Roman style, but very much as it is celebrated by Nonconformists, except that the bread and wine are received at the altar rails kneeling, instead of being passed round like the collection-plate. Such a service cannot strike you as anything but Protestant, yet curiously enough in this case you are able to follow it word for word in your Prayer Book !

§ 37. Puzzled by this, and wondering which can be the genuine Anglicanism, you consult an Anglican friend, who happens to be a teacher in a Bible-class. He explains to you that the Prayer Book Anglicanism is the genuine article. The usages of that other Anglicanism, he says, have been borrowed from the Church of Rome, and are expressly forbidden by the rubrics of the Prayer Book and expressly condemned by the Thirty-nine Articles. He cannot understand how men with such Romanising tendencies and beliefs can in conscience remain in a Church whose official creed so emphatically discountenances such tendencies and beliefs.

His logic seems quite irrefutable, and you propose forthwith to join the Kensitites ; but are saved from this by a more advanced Anglican, who shows you that there is another point of view from which the Prayer Book may be regarded. Your new friend admits that High Mass and Reservation and the other Catholic rites that you witnessed on that memorable Sunday morning are not expressly enjoined by the Prayer Book, but points out that in the Order for the Administration of Holy Communion ' the main body and essentials ' are there, even as the Preface to the Prayer Book suggests. He also explains that, though the Thirty-nine Articles may seem to deny Catholic faith, they never do so categorically, but have been deliberately so worded as to provide a loophole by means of which in each and every case they may be reconciled with Catholic faith. The impression of ' dangerous deceit,' created upon you by that first Sunday service, and confirmed by the Bible-class interpretation of Article XXXI, is thus somewhat relieved. The faintness of the ' main body and essentials ' reminds one of

spirit photography, but one cannot deny a resemblance. Neither can one deny that the Thirty-nine Articles turn out upon examination to be less anti-Catholic than one at first supposed. One is surprised that through so tiny a loophole so large an amount of Catholicity should have been introduced. One also wonders why, if Anglicans be truly Catholics, their bishops do not insist upon them behaving as such. But that the faith and practice of *some* Anglicans is Catholic, is manifest. Anglicanism in the concrete is ambiguous. So also to some extent is its creed.

§ 38. The ambiguity of Anglicanism complicates the problem of Home Reunion considerably. If the Anglican Church be still Catholic, it ought obviously to reunite with other Catholic bodies, but other Catholic bodies, rightly or wrongly, do not acknowledge it as such. It is not that they will not, but simply that they cannot. Hence in that direction apparently a full stop. If, on the other hand, the Anglican Church be Protestant, it ought obviously to reunite with other Protestant bodies ; but many Anglicans do not admit that their Church is Protestant, and, as these Anglicans now form a powerful party within the Church, and are hostile to a reunion with Protestants, in this direction also there is apparently a full stop. From the point of view of Home Reunion, therefore, there is a dual problem to be solved. First, granted that the Articles ought to be interpreted ' in their literal and grammatical sense,' as the King's Declaration requires them to be, and as official Anglicanism is inclined to interpret them (and likewise the Prayer Book), would Free Churchmen be willing to accept Anglicanism at this estimate and to agree to reunion on this more or less Protestant basis ? Secondly, supposing the answer in this case to be in the affirmative, can those Anglicans who regard their Church as Catholic consent to such a reunion without a sacrifice of principle or of faith ?

§ 39. ' Catholic ' Anglicans would most certainly answer this question in the negative, and from the Catholic point of view they are right. The Nicene Creed, as we have already pointed out, cannot be considered in these days an adequate expression of Catholic faith. It needs interpreting, and the interpretation which has been put upon it by Free Churchmen in their Catechism and Declaratory Statement is not by any means satisfactory from the Catholic standpoint. It errs by the omission of all distinctively Catholic tenets of faith. It is also characterised by a vagueness, which would seem almost to be deliberate. The Trinity is not stated as a fact or as a truth, but merely as a mystery (Q. 19), and instead of stating plainly that Jesus *is* the Son of God, we are told merely that *He said about Himself* that He was the Son of God (Q. 5).

The method which has been adopted in dealing with differences is also unsatisfactory. They are simply ignored. There is not a word of Predestination, though many Protestants still cling in this matter to the Calvinistic view. Hell is referred to merely as 'eternal death.' If differences be not of faith, to ignore them is legitimate. But if they be of faith, as they are with many of us, so to act is plainly impossible. The mere fact that the Free Church confession of faith 'is not a disciplinary, still less a doctrinal standard,' that it is not meant to 'supersede or in any way alter the place of whatever doctrinal standards any of the Federating Churches may maintain,' but is merely a Declaratory Statement which leaves each Church free to 'preserve its own autonomy as regards faith and practice,' is sufficient in itself to render that Statement impossible as a basis of reunion from the standpoint of Catholic principles.

§ 40. On the other hand, it can hardly be questioned that Anglicans are in a radically different position in this respect from members of the Roman communion. Since the schism between East and West and the schism between the English Church and the other Churches of the West that remained in communion with Rome, each Church or group of Churches has developed independently. As a consequence its faith has grown different, and has been expressed by diversity of creeds. Each Church has supplemented the Creed of Nicæa by its own particular confessions: the Catholic Church by the decrees of numerous councils, the Lateran, Florence, Trent, the Vatican, and also by the decrees of its popes; the Orthodox Churches by the Confessions of Gennadios, Mogilas, Dositheos, and Metrophanes Kritopulos; the Anglican Church by thirty-nine Articles; the Presbyterian Churches by the Westminster Confession and subsequent declarations with respect to it; the English Free Churches, most recently of all, by their Catechism and Declaratory Statement. Moreover, these confessions, except in the case of the Free Churches, have been drawn up, as was the faith of Nicæa, in view of some doctrine or doctrines which the Church in question wished to insist upon, or to exclude as erroneous and harmful. It is by these official pronouncements, therefore, that in view of reunion the faith of each Church must be judged, *for it was for this very purpose that they were drawn up*. Particular churches, local or national, and individuals or groups of the same were to be admitted to or precluded from the communion of the Church that devised the confession according as they accepted it or not.

It is absurd to suppose that Anglicans are bound to stand by the confessions of the Greek or of the Roman Churches in the

drawing up of which they had no share. They have their own confession, and it is by that that they are bound to stand. If it be ambiguous, as they allege, or if their Church allow her members the greatest latitude in interpreting it, so much the better for the chances of an Evangelical reunion. Anglicans used to regard their Church as a *via media* between Catholicism and Protestantism, and it is for such a *via media* that nowadays many Protestants are looking. May not Anglicanism be able to provide it, at least as a temporary expedient, and so, by bringing about 'home' reunion, to pave the way for that further reunion which all hope for and which some think will thus be promoted? As to how far further reunion *will* thus be promoted is doubtless open to question. But, as it is the past action of the Anglican Church that is in part responsible for the divided state of England at present, so it is for her, at least in her own interests, if not also in those of Christendom, to put the matter right, if she can, by bringing within her fold those who ought never to have become separate from it. She cannot sacrifice principle; but may not 'home' reunion be possible without a sacrifice of principle, provided only Presbyterians and Free Churchmen accept the Nicene Creed, and can be induced to accept, in addition, episcopacy? There would seem to be one and only one ground upon which advanced Anglicans can consistently repudiate reunion with their separated brethren in the event of their adopting episcopacy, and that is that they be able to show not only that their Articles *may* bear, but also that they *must* bear, the interpretation which advanced Anglicanism puts upon them, and that they cannot bear any other.

5. *The Problem of Method.*

§ 41. We have distinguished within the reunion movement three main currents, which, since they differ in aim, differ also fundamentally in character.

Of the first of these, which seeks to heal the schism between East and West, we shall say nothing further. For us it is hardly a practical problem toward the solution of which further discussion would be likely to render much service. The most we can do is to remember that, remote as the East may appear to be in place and rite and custom, it once did belong, and still ought to belong, to the self-same Church of Christ which was founded for men of all nations; and, so remembering, to pray that some day God's will in this matter as in others may be accomplished.

The second movement, if such it can be called, opens up three

main problems: (1) the bearing that reunion on Catholic principles would have upon righteousness; (2) the problem of securing a faith basis; (3) the question of exclusive claims, Catholic and Papal. Of these the chief problem is how to secure that community of faith which we are all agreed is a first necessity, if reunion is ever to be brought about. With it the other problems are closely bound up, for it is from faith that righteousness flows, by worship and sacraments that both faith and righteousness are sustained and expressed, and by polity—which we believe to be of divine institution—that faith is preserved, worship promoted, and righteousness encouraged. On all points a Catholic reunion supposes unity.

The third movement, which seeks merely reunion of those Churches which are to be found throughout the English-speaking race and are largely Protestant in character, resolves itself from the Presbyterian and Free Church point of view into a problem of polity, and from the Anglican point of view into the problem of how rightly to interpret the faith which the Anglican Church officially professes and approves. It is a great thing that Congregationalists, Baptists, English Presbyterians, Wesleyan Methodists, Primitive Methodists, the Methodist New Connection, Bible Christians, United Methodists, Independent Methodists, the Wesleyan Reform Union, the Moravian Brethren, the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection, and the Disciples of Christ, should have united in one federation; but, since in point of fact we all profess to be disciples of Christ, it is manifest that we should be sufficiently of one mind not merely to federate, but also to worship Him and work for Him together as members of one Body and one Vine, even as He commanded us. The questions we have to discuss are whether with a view to this end, Free Churchmen can in conscience sacrifice independence for episcopacy, and whether Anglicans of a more Catholic turn of mind can in conscience consent to reunion on this basis.

The first step toward attaining reunion is to realise its necessity. The second is to discover the obstacles that lie in the way. The third is to remove them. It is to the latter problem that we must now address ourselves, and it is of vital importance here to adopt the right method.

§ 42. One method of attempting to dissolve differences is that of the round-table conference, in which each party states its views, and differences are discussed in the hope of coming to some sort of agreement on the basis of compromise. This method has served a good end in that it has brought out the fundamental unity of principle and of faith that exists among all Protestant Churches; but as yet it has done little toward solving the problem

of differences. On the contrary it has tended rather to emphasise them, and to create amongst many Anglicans an atmosphere that is distinctly unfavourable to reunion with their once conforming, but now non-conforming, brethren. Moreover, to treat differences as matters which can be settled by concession and compromise is radically wrong until one has shown that the differences to be so treated in no wise pertain to faith as professed by any of the contracting parties. One cannot compromise where there is question of divine revelation.

There is also another difficulty. Many differences, whether of faith or worship or polity, have existed so long and have cost so much to maintain that a Church that is asked to surrender them naturally feels that, in doing so, it would be false to its traditions and would be pronouncing the blood of its fathers to have been sacrificed in vain. This difficulty the static method of the round-table conference does not touch. It starts from the *status quo nunc* and ignores the past altogether. Its chance of success is staked on one factor only, the growing conviction that diversity is a disaster and the corresponding attitude of conciliation that this conviction has produced. That factor is of great value and importance, but it is doubtful whether it will of itself be capable of leading even to a Protestant reunion.

§ 43. There is, however, another method of dealing with differences, which is at any rate more sound; and that is to go back to the parting of the ways and try to discover their cause. This relieves the tension; for the main question now becomes not 'What do we differ about?'; but 'How come we to differ at all?'; thus transferring the emphasis from the nature of differences to their origin. It is also a method that is applicable to all differences, Protestant-Catholic, Anglican-Presbyterian-Nonconformist, and to the differences between East and West. We all of us believe in a revelation made to us through Jesus Christ, which it is of the utmost importance that we should possess in its entirety; but in regard to certain truths some assert and others deny that they are part of this revelation. Why? It is in part due to different rules of faith; but how did our rules of faith come to be different? Again, we all believe that there must be some form of public worship and some form also of Church organisation; but while some believe in ceremonies and Masses and bishops, others do not, and while some are anti-clerical, anti-sacerdotal, and to some extent anti-sacramental, others are just the reverse. Why? It has something to do with righteousness, which all of us seek, though in different ways; but how comes it that we seek righteousness in different ways, and are each convinced that our own way is best?

Is it prejudice, history, tradition, heredity, temperament, misunderstanding, experience or the lack of it, or what? It is historical questions such as these that we must endeavour to answer if we would find a satisfactory and permanent solution of the problem of reunion, for that problem is a question not of statics but of dynamics, not of compromise but of principle, purpose, cause.

§ 44. A reformation is an attempt to get back to primitive Christianity, and there have been many such in the course of its history, some successful, others not, some occurring within the Church, others leading to schism. Of these the greatest was undoubtedly that which Luther inaugurated; but it was not the only one. There have been several reformations in Scotland since the days when Presbyterianism was brought over from Geneva by John Knox, and in England a still greater number, both Puritan and Wesleyan, since the reformation of the English Church was taken in hand by the two Thomases, Cromwell and Cranmer. In these reformations lies the clue not only to all our differences, but also to the vast amount of prejudice, antipathy, and misunderstanding that hampers the cause of reunion to-day. For we have been accustomed to study them only in books in which they have been glorified, or in a still more glorified tradition. This is especially so in the case of the Protestant Reformation, wherein lies the primary cause of our differences. The oft-repeated story of the cruelty of Mary, the tyranny of James, the wonderful virtues and patience of Protestant martyrs and the corresponding wickedness of monks and nuns and priests, has probably done more than anything else to make England a Protestant country. Bad acts of Catholic sovereigns, bishops, laymen, and priests, have been emphasised with an 'I-told-you-so' or 'What-else-could-you-expect' kind of remark. Bad acts recorded of Protestant princes, laymen, or priests, have been glossed over, their good acts persistently extolled. And what is perhaps of even greater importance, every event that has turned out to the advantage of Protestantism has been exhibited to admiring generations as an act of divine interposition, regardless of facts. The spirit, moreover, that prompted the 'Marian murders' or the massacre of St. Bartholomew is represented as a truly Catholic spirit; and exclusively so, for other Churches are not supposed to have had anything to do with the burning, hanging, drawing and quartering of their opponents. Nor are they supposed to have had any scandals: only popes and papists are essentially bad.

It is small wonder that a Church so grotesquely caricatured and maligned should still be hated and feared; for prejudice dies slowly in spite of the efforts of modern historians to remove it.

Yet the Catholic Church is not the only one that has suffered in this respect. Other reformations have been glorified besides the Protestant one, and other people, besides Papists, painted in colours that are black. The schisms that led to the Free Churches, whether English or Scottish, are frequently depicted by their admirers as movements towards liberty and light, second only in value to the Protestant Reformation that preceded them. For many there are no two sides to such questions. Chalmers and Wesley and Kilburn and Bourne for their followers are heroes, as doubtless they were; but *par conséquence* Romanists, Anglicans, 'Moderate' Presbyterians, and the disciples of Bunting approximate to devils incarnate.

§ 45. Of these reformations—one and all of them—we must revise our judgments, if we would ever attain reunion. Their fruits have been neither wholly good nor wholly bad. Yet, however much we may esteem and honour those who promoted them if we happen to have been born in their fold, something unquestionably went wrong somewhere, or we should never have been landed in this most distressing and deplorably disastrous diversity. If we want to put an end to it, therefore, the obvious way surely is to try to disentangle the cause that has led to it, from other causes and motives that were not evil, but good. As things stand at present, it looks as if reunion could be attained only by a sacrifice of principle. That surely is a radically false impression consequent upon the manner in which the problem is sometimes discussed. Nobody ought even to be asked to sacrifice a principle that is worth having, as most principles are. Doubtless there will have to be a certain amount of compromise in matters that are recognised to be of only secondary importance, but in general what is good, and what experience has shown to be good, must be kept, and only that which is evil, or productive of evil, immolated on the altar of peace. How this is possible we can discover only by asking how came our forefathers to seek Christ by shattering His bark. In history should lie buried not only the root of diversity, but also its remedy.

§ 46. Reunion on the basis of compromise is impracticable, and, even if practicable would not last; while reunion on the basis of 'all dogma excluded' would put an end to Christianity. On the other hand, so long as the strife of sect *versus* sect goes on, the world will go on becoming daily more sceptical, and so long as different missionary societies go on preaching different religions to pagan peoples in the name of Christianity, these peoples, as they become more enlightened, will follow the example of Japan and throw off the Christian yoke as a useless encumbrance.

Differences and sects have *got* to be eliminated somehow, and that at all costs, if Christianity is once again to prosper. Do not let us make the mistake that was made by the Church of the sixteenth century, and put off our own reformation until it is too late to avert a terrible disaster. The circumstances are not unlike: revolution is everywhere in the air, and there is a new reformation threatening in Modernism that will leave us nothing of Christianity but its nomenclature and its beautiful imagery. The difficulty that we have to contend with now is not too much faith, but too little of it, not a unity that has run over into the temporal sphere, but the absence of all practical unity whatsoever; while the evil that we have to remedy amongst Christians is not unrighteousness, but a perfectly appalling diversity, alike of organisation and worship and faith. If Christianity is to succeed, we must become one, as once we were one, and as Christ would have us one—one externally as well as internally, one in faith as well as in purpose and endeavour. Our reunion must be as truly Catholic in character as it is to be in scope.

§ 47. Do not let us be disheartened by the prospect. It is not bright. Reunion seems a long way off, and there are apparently insurmountable obstacles. Its accomplishment will entail much hard work, much hard thinking, much self-sacrifice. But it is reunion that is wanted, and it must be a Catholic reunion if it is to bring solace and strength to an agonised human race. From the human standpoint such an ideal may seem to be impossible, but so also once did the ideal of the Oxford movement, faced, as it at first was, with a Church that was Protestant from sexton to primate. Yet the Oxford movement has produced results far exceeding the hopes of even its most sanguine supporters. And so, too, will the Free Catholic movement that has arisen among Nonconformists. It is a Catholic faith men are groping for, not that of a party or sect; nor yet a faith of their own manufacture, but the faith of the Messias whom God sent. And that faith they will surely find, for the Messias still lives. The grain of mustard-seed is planted, and it cannot but grow. What we have to do is to cultivate it to the utmost of our power, mindful always, however, that it is God who will give the increase, and that argument is useless without prayer.

ESSAY III

THE PROBLEM OF POLITY

'And He gave some apostles and some prophets and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ; until we all meet into the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ: . . . from whom the whole Body, being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body, unto the edifying of itself in charity.'—EPHESIANS iv. 11–16.

§ 1. IN order that the Reformed Churches of England and Scotland may be brought together into one Church, three reunions are necessary: (1) the reunion of the Established, the Episcopalian, and the Free Churches of Scotland; (2) the reunion of the Scottish Church, thus formed, with the Established Church of England; and (3) the reunion of the Established with the Free Churches of England. In each case the main difficulty is polity. Faith, as judged by the official declarations of these Churches and by their official attitude toward these declarations, is substantially the same. Polity is not. Some one, therefore, has got to give way, for if there is to be one Church there must be one polity; otherwise the Churches would merely be federated, and would not form, as the early Church did, and as the teaching of Christ requires that they should do, one corporate and organic whole. How, then, is this problem of polity to be solved?

1. *The Scottish Churches.*

§ 2. In Scotland the movement toward reunion is much more advanced than it is in England, for the very obvious reason that between the Churches of Scotland there exists already not only the same faith and the same mode of worship, but also, except in the case of the Episcopalian Church, the same form of polity, that of Kirk Session, Presbytery, Provincial Synod, and General Assembly. The Free Churches have already united: the Secession with the Relief Church in 1847 to form the United Presbyterian

Church, and the latter with the Free Church in 1900 to form the United Free Church, thus leaving in Scotland only two non-Episcopalian bodies of any size: namely, the Free Church and the Established Presbyterian Church.

These Churches were originally one, and are still one in structure. The three great secessions that took place were none of them concerned with faith but merely with liberty. Erskine left the Established Church because he held that every society, and above all a Christian Church, should be free to choose its own servants. Gillespie left it because its General Assembly insisted upon a presentation that was unacceptable to the Dunfermline Presbytery. The great disruption under Chalmers took place because the House of Lords declared that Presbyteries were bound to 'receive and admit whatsoever qualified minister was presented by the Crown or by lay patrons.' By an Act of Parliament of 1874 patronage was abolished for Scotland, thus removing the main grievance that had led to the schisms.

§ 3. The question of patronage, however, is closely bound up with that of establishment and endowment. The early secessionists at first were in favour of establishment, holding, with the Westminster Confession, that it is the duty of the civil magistrate to look to the preservation of unity, peace, and truth in the Church, and to the suppression of blasphemies, heresies, corruptions, and abuses. They even made the covenants, which insist upon this doctrine, a condition of communion. Many were opposed to this, however; hence the burgher schism, which was eventually healed by dropping the 'physical force clauses' and making assent to the covenants optional. Gradually the Secession Church adopted what is known as 'the Voluntary Principle,' and in the end became scarcely less opposed to State support than it was to State control. In this it was at one with the 'Relief Presbyteries,' which had seceded expressly 'for the relief of Christians oppressed (by the State) in their Christian privileges'; and it was on this basis that the two Churches united in 1847.

The great Secession of 1843 also was closely connected with State control. The General Assembly, on principle, had agreed with the seceders, so far as patronage was concerned, and in 1834 had passed an Act granting to communicants a veto over the induction of ministers. The House of Lords declared this Act null and void. Still persisting, however, a little later the General Assembly deprived seven ministers of the Strathbogie Presbytery for attempting to induct a minister to whom the congregation objected. Their action was overruled by the civil courts. This brought matters to a crisis, and a 'claim of right' was presented

to Parliament. It was rejected, with the result that, whereas the General Assembly submitted to the State's dictation, Chalmers and 470 ministers 'came out.' The Free Church, thus produced, still held, however, that it is the duty of the State to support and protect the Church, and hence could not accept in its entirety the Voluntary Principle, which repudiated all connection with the State. In 1863 an attempt to unite with the Secession and Relief Churches, now become the United Presbyterian Church, broke down for this reason. Gradually, however, as the movement for disestablishment grew, the Free Church modified her attitude, and in 1900 the long expected union took place. The United Free Church of Scotland is thus committed in principle as in practice to the Voluntary Doctrine, whereas the Auld Kirk of Scotland is 'Established.'

§ 4. This is the chief difficulty which a reunion between the two great non-Episcopalian bodies in Scotland has to overcome, and in the main it would seem to have been already overcome. Nobody was opposed to establishment at first, any more than they were at first opposed to patronage. Opposition to these elements in the Presbyterian system came into existence only when men began to realise that they were a bar to all progress and improvement. The protest all along, therefore, has not been so much against establishment itself as against its abuse, and since abuses have now largely disappeared and the State no longer interferes with the action of the General Assembly, the disestablishment campaign has died down. 'We leave a vitiated Establishment; we are ready to return to a pure one,' said Chalmers. The Presbyterian Establishment has now been purified: hence reunion should be, and *is*, if Dr. Cooper's judgment be correct, a foregone conclusion, so far as the non-Episcopalian Churches are concerned. Reunion with the Scottish Episcopalian Church involves another problem, similar in character to that presented by the proposed reunion between the Churches of England and Scotland, under which heading, therefore, we shall discuss it.

2. *The Established Churches of England and Scotland.*

§ 5. Of the proposals of the Lambeth Quadrilateral Dr. Cooper writes:

> Three forts of this quadrilateral we in the Scottish Presbyterian Churches hold that we accept, already. The fourth, and other things along with it, we shall adopt on their merits and for the sake of unity and peace to which we are called alike by the needs of the work we have to do and the revealed will of our Divine Lord and Saviour.[1]

[1] *Reunion: A Voice from Scotland*, p. 85.

The first three forts of the Quadrilateral are Holy Scripture, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, and the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The fourth is 'the Historic Episcopate, locally adapted to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His Church.' In episcopacy, therefore, lies the main problem.

In order to solve this problem Dr. Cooper appeals to history. To episcopacy as such, he urges, the Scottish nation as a whole has never been opposed, but merely to episcopacy forced upon an unwilling nation by English overlords as the symbol of their overlordship. Episcopacy, like Popery, came to be synonymous in the Scottish mind with tyranny, because it was abused. Yet in reality it is the most venerable and most enduring of all forms of ecclesiastical polity, and, when duly safeguarded, is no tyranny at all. It is by no means repugnant to Presbyterianism, for in their early days Presbyterians were not averse to it. Nor is it incompatible with Presbyterianism, for in the Scottish Episcopalian Church Presbyterianism and Episcopacy are to some extent combined. Granted, therefore, that bishops be constitutionally elected, and constitutional safeguards be provided against a possible abuse of their power, the Scottish nation would not be unwilling to adopt an episcopal form of government, if by such means reunion with the English Church could be brought about.

§ 6. If the attitude of the Moderator of the Church of Scotland really represents that of the nation for which he speaks, it means that the main difficulty in the way of reunion between the Churches of England and Scotland has already been overcome, and that, curiously enough, in precisely the way in which we have suggested that all our differences should be overcome—namely, by considering them not in *statu quo*, but in the light of history and in relation to the purpose which those who introduced them had in view. If the Presbyterians of Scotland are willing to accept an Episcopal polity, it is because, ably led by their chief, they have already asked themselves *whence* that violent antipathy and prejudice which has so long characterised their attitude towards episcopacy, and have discovered that the source of it lies not in the nature of episcopacy, but in the way in which English Kings at one time sought to force it upon them, and in the manner in which it has sometimes been exercised. Experience has shown that both an Episcopal and a Presbyterian polity *can* work well, as also that both are open to abuses. It is proposed, therefore, that for Scotland the two polities should be combined, the autocratic element involved in an Episcopal regime being counteracted and safeguarded by the retention of a democratic element in the existing system of

Church courts upon which laymen as well as ecclesiastics find a place.

§ 7. In a modified form then, it would seem that Presbyterians are willing for the sake of reunion to accept episcopacy *as a polity*; but what of its relation to the validity of orders and sacraments? Presbyterians profess to hold fast to what is sometimes called 'the great antecedent position,' i.e. they not only believe in sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper), and that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper can be validly administered only by a Presbyter in orders, but they also believe that valid orders can only be conferred by those who already possess them through the laying on of hands. They do not believe, however, that bishops are the only people who can validly confer orders. In the Presbyterian Church they are conferred by the Presbyterate, and Presbyterians maintain, and always have maintained, that orders so conferred are no less valid than those conferred by bishops. They are willing to reconsider the question of episcopacy, and even to admit that it may be for the *bene esse* of the Church, but they refuse to relinquish belief in the validity of their own orders, or to contemplate for a moment episcopal reordination. Many Anglicans, on the other hand, hold that episcopacy is not merely a polity, but also a divinely appointed instrument whereby valid orders, i.e. the power validly to 'celebrate the Lord's Supper' and validly to pronounce absolution from sin, are communicated from one generation to the next, and without which they cannot be so communicated. Hence a difficulty both theoretical and practical.

§ 8. The theoretical aspect of this difficulty is comparatively easy to solve, for the necessity of Episcopal ordination is not an article of Anglican faith. Anglicans, even Anglican bishops, may hold in regard to it what view they please. The Anglican Church, therefore, is herself a living example of how these differences may be reconciled. All that is needful is that, so far as faith is concerned, nothing be prescribed. All Anglicans accept episcopacy as a polity; but as to its necessity they differ, and are at liberty to differ as much as they please. Presbyterians, therefore, are willing to do all that the Anglican Church herself insists upon.

This solution, in fact, has already passed beyond the stage of mere speculation. Availing themselves of the vagueness of the official teaching of their Church, and indeed acting strictly in accord with it, representatives of the Anglican Episcopate in conference with Nonconformists have agreed to waive for the time being the question of 'the origin of the Episcopate historically, or its

authority doctrinally,' and have suggested as the necessary conditions of any possibility of reunion:

1. That continuity with the historic Episcopate should be effectively preserved.

2. That in order that the rights and responsibilities of the whole Christian community in the government of the Church may be adequately recognised, the Episcopate should reassume a constitutional form, both as regards the method of the election of the bishop as by clergy and people, and the method of government after election.

3. That acceptance of the fact of Episcopacy, and not any theory as to its character should be all that is asked for.[1]

§ 9. But what of the Articles? Anglicans who interpret them in a Catholic sense discover there, or, if not there, at any rate in the Preface to the Ordinal, Catholic doctrine, with which this attitude toward episcopacy is very far from compatible. But is Catholic doctrine really there? Article XXIII merely says that no one may preach or minister the sacraments in the congregation

before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same . . . by men who have publick authority given unto them in the Congregation to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

Presbyterians would readily grant this. In fact, they would say that something more than 'authority' is required, if the sacraments are to be validly administered. Article XXXVI is a little more explicit. It declares that the Anglican Ordinal is not superstitious and ungodly, and decrees that whosoever are or shall be ordered or consecrated according to the Rites of that Book, are 'rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered.' But these statements also Presbyterians would grant, for, as usual, there is no condemnation of the rites of other Churches; nor is there, for that matter, any question of validity at all, unless we understand it to be implied in that ambiguous term 'rightly.' A third pronouncement is contained in the Preface to the Ordinal, which asserts that from the Apostles' time the offices of bishop, priest, and deacon were

had in such reverend estimation that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, and examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same, and also by publick prayer, with the imposition of hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority.

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[1] Second Interim Report of a sub-committee appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York's Committee and by representatives of the English Free Churches' Commissions in connexion with the proposed World-conference on Faith and Order.

Hence, 'to the intent that these Orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed,' it decrees not indeed that no man *is* or shall *be* a *valid* bishop, etc., but that

> no man shall be *accounted or taken to be* a *lawful* bishop, priest, or deacon in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following, or hath had formerly episcopal consecration or ordination.

The distinction which we have italicised is important, for it leaves the question of whether episcopal ordination is necessary to validity still open. The decree, like the corresponding one in Article XXXVI, is a regulation, not a dogma. It merely lays down what is required for the legal exercise of episcopal and priestly functions in the Anglican Church; which is that those who fill these 'offices' should be 'approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority' and in accordance with the prescribed form. Orders conferred by a presbytery are neither approved nor condemned: only, as the law stands at present, it would be *illegal* for those who have not received episcopal ordination to minister in the Anglican communion.

It would seem then that 'acceptance of the fact of episcopacy and not any theory as to its character *should* be all that is asked for in the event of reunion.' Taken in their 'literal and grammatical sense,' the Articles require no more than this. Neither does the Prayer Book. Nor yet, as the sub-committee has pointed out, is any particular theory of the origin and nature of episcopacy 'now required of ministers of the Church of England.' Anglicans, even after the reunion, will still be at liberty to hold that episcopacy is a divine institution, and that without it valid orders and valid sacraments are impossible, for 'the acceptance of episcopacy on these terms should not involve any Christian community in the necessity of disowning its past.' But so also will Presbyterians be at liberty to hold that episcopacy is *not* a divine institution, nor in any way necessary to validity in orders and sacraments, just as do Dr. Hensley Henson and the liberal party amongst Anglicans at present. All parties to the contract then should be satisfied, for none will renounce their past, nor will the official attitude of the Anglican Church toward episcopacy in any way be changed.

§ 10. The practical difficulty is more serious. The reordination of Presbyterian ministers to the 'priesthood' is out of the question, for to this they would never submit. Yet, if they are not reordained according to the Anglican rite, many Anglicans will have doubts as to the validity of their orders, and, if they be permitted to officiate in the Anglican Church, will have doubts also as to the validity of the sacraments they administer. On the other hand,

if they are not permitted so to officiate, it will be tantamount to questioning their orders, there will be no intercommunion, and reunion will be simply a farce.

§ 11. A solution of this difficulty was proposed at an informal conference of representatives of the Established, the United Free, and the Episcopal Churches of Scotland in 1918.[1] It suggested a 'period of preparation,' during which the Scottish Episcopal Church should adopt the Church Court system, and the other Scottish Churches should cause the moderators of their Provincial Synods to be consecrated as bishops. By this means the Scottish Episcopal Church would be brought into line with other Presbyterian Churches, and non-Episcopal Churches would gradually obtain an episcopally ordained clergy. This would solve the problem from the point of view of those who hold episcopal ordination to be a necessity, but would postpone reunion until the present generation of Presbyterian clergy has died out. It would also leave unsolved the problem how to make bishops for the Scottish Churches, of ministers who, from the Anglican point of view, are not yet priests.

§ 12. Dr. Cooper offers another solution, that of the 'precedents of 1610.' In 1580 the General Assembly of the Scottish Church, already Protestant and Reformed, definitely abolished by a majority vote the office of bishop as unwarranted by the Scriptures of God, and as 'brought in by the folly and corruption of man's invention!' In 1597 another Assembly declared that none but ministers must be made bishops, and in 1600 three bishops were appointed, though without consecration! In 1606 the Scottish Parliament ratified the estate of bishops, and a convention at Linlithgow resolved that they should be constant moderators. Finally, the General Assembly of 1610, under pressure from King James, voted for the re-establishment of Episcopacy throughout the Kingdom. This done, the King summoned three Scottish ministers to England, and 'requested and required' three Anglican bishops to consecrate them. They did so *per saltum*, i.e., without previous ordination to the diaconate or priesthood, having agreed amongst themselves and in consultation with Bancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, that

> where bishops could not be had, the ordination given by presbyters must be esteemed lawful, otherwise it might be doubted if there was any lawful vocation in most of the Reformed Churches![2]

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[1] Cooper, *op. cit.*, pp. 104–5.

[2] Spottiswood, *History of the Church of Scotland* (1676), p. 514, quoted by Cooper in *Reunion, A Voice from Scotland*, p. 42.

By this act it was deemed in England that the Scottish Church had done all that was necessary, and it was forthwith admitted to full communion with its Anglican sister, in spite of the fact that none of the existing clergy were reordained! It remained in this communion till 1638, when Episcopacy was again abolished and the Presbyterian regime re-established. Moreover, the succession in the schismatic Episcopal Church, which broke away from Established Presbyterianism, is derived from these same three bishops, ordained in 1610 *per saltum*, yet that Church has always been in communion with the Anglican Church and its orders have never been called in question even by High Anglicans. The Anglican Church, therefore, has clearly approved, both by implication and by its own act, the validity of ordination by a Presbytery. It does not admit Presbyterian Churches to its communion, except that which is episcopal, but the reason is presumably that they have adopted a different polity, not because they have invalid orders and an invalid Sacrament.

§ 13. The Precedents of 1610 are strong ones, and were questioned neither by Andrewes nor Laud, once the deed was done. Dr. Cooper suggests, therefore, that recourse should be had to a like expedient at the present juncture, and in 1918, when the Lambeth Conference was called upon to consider this matter, it passed a resolution to the effect that

> in the welcome event of any project of Reunion between any Church of the Anglican Communion and any Presbyterian or other non-Episcopal Church which, while preserving the Faith in its integrity and purity, has also exhibited care as to the form and intention of ordination to the ministry, reaching the stage of responsible official negotiation, *it might be possible to make an approach to reunion on the basis of consecrations to the Episcopate on lines suggested by the precedents of* 1610.

Granted then that, when the stage of responsible official negotiation is reached, this resolution be officially confirmed, the prospect of reunion between Anglicans and Presbyterians should not be far distant. Consecration *per saltum* will imply that the Anglican Church, in officially recognising the priestly orders of the Presbyterian clergy who are thus to be consecrated, also recognises the priestly orders of all Presbyterian clergy. The outstanding obstacle to immediate reunion will thus be removed.

The way is clear. The proposed basis of reunion is in accordance with precedent, involves no sacrifice of Anglican principle, entails no break with the past, but, on the contrary, ratifies it. The question of a liturgy would adjust itself in time, for already

there is a movement toward its reintroduction in the Church of Scotland. Confirmation seems to be implied in episcopacy, and will probably be introduced with bishops as a ratification of the growing custom of renewing one's baptismal promises. There is also in Scotland, as in England, a growing desire for 'the restoration of the Holy Communion to its right place in relation to the worship of the Church and to the spiritual life of the baptized.'[1] Everything promises well, except for one point, the question of the *legality* of allowing ministers not episcopally ordained to officiate in the Church of England; and that of course could easily be removed.

§ 14. But will it be removed? Will the precedents of 1610 be acceptable to the advanced party amongst Anglicans? They are not Catholic precedents, but distinctively Anglican; and though one might argue that since bishops are *a fortiori* priests, consecration as a bishop *a fortiori* involves ordination to the priesthood, one might argue with no less justice that, since it is impossible to convey to another what one does not oneself possess, it is futile to consecrate a man to ordain others unless he has himself been ordained. True, if Anglicans do not accept the precedents of 1610 they ought logically to repudiate the orders of the Scottish Episcopalian Church, and it may be that they will accept these precedents, at least so far as to consent to consecrate bishops for the Scottish Churches *per saltum*. Or again, Presbyterian moderators might seek ordination and consecration elsewhere, as 'Free' Catholics are doing; in which case they would probably have valid orders in the strictly Catholic sense. But help should naturally come from the sister communion in England. She is a *via media*, and by uniting with her Presbyterian sister would be introducing into Scotland that characteristic of her middle position, an episcopal polity, a liturgy, and a rite of confirmation. The way would thus be prepared in Scotland for a revival of Catholic ideas similar to that which in England has already taken place. The eyes of all are watching the stage, eagerly awaiting the moment when these two great Churches, historic though reformed, shall by joining hands set an example which cannot but be of the greatest advantage to themselves, and which will stimulate others that have sprung from them to hasten onward in their wake. Surely in days which are admittedly not normal, it is not for a Church that herself is not normal, to stand in the way of a project so far-reaching in its consequences for the sake of a scruple which can only be upheld at the sacrifice of consistency and by definitely repudiating her own past.

[1] *Constitution of the Scottish Church Society*, iv. 6.

3. *The National and the Free Churches of England.*

(i) *Free Churchmanship* versus *Episcopacy.*

§ 15. The problem of reunion between the Established and the Free Churches of England presents a difficulty far more serious than is presented by either of those reunions which we have just been discussing, and, as we have already indicated, that difficulty lies in the rooted aversion which Free Churchmen have for any form of polity which will entail a limitation of their freedom, and especially for that form, which, on this very account, they repudiated at the moment of their inception. Baptists and Congregationalists still hold that the unit for Church organisation should be the individual congregation, while the followers of John Wesley hold *mordicus* to the Connection, which, voicing itself through a Conference upon which all classes now are represented, provides a form of government at once democratic and centralised.

Time back questions of polity were regarded as of supreme importance. Faith was thought to be involved, and therefore no one would yield either one way or the other. This unyielding attitude has to some extent passed away. Though each Evangelical Church may still claim that its own constitution is nearer to the apostolic ideal and more conducive to Christian liberty, scarcely any now maintain their position as vital to the integrity of faith. Yet polity still presents a grave difficulty, since each Church is reluctant to sacrifice what it has fought for so strenuously, and is fearful lest, in so doing, it should compromise its power to do good.

§ 16. The love of liberty is deeply ingrained in the hearts of the British people, and from start to finish in the long and bitter struggle by which it has been obtained, the English Free Churches claim to have led the way. It was they, in the person of the Puritans, who formed the backbone of the Parliamentary Army. It was they who suffered most under the regime of the later Stuarts, and continued to suffer under the milder and more constitutional tyranny of Anne and the Georges. It is they who claim to have obtained for us the abolition of slavery, the Reform Bill, and free trade, not to mention the Act of 1870 which bestowed upon us 'national' education. For centuries English Free Churchmen have been the champions of liberty—liberty of all kinds, political and social liberty, as well as liberty of worship and of conscience. Liberty is their watchword, a part of their creed, and what they have gained at such a cost they will not willingly surrender. Rather they will seek to increase it, and to make it yet more secure. It

was for this reason and not because they sought unity for its own sake, that they became federated, and it is for this reason that they dread to take the further step that would make of their Federation one Church. To solve a problem that involves a stake so enormous and a tradition so constant and so beloved is no easy task, yet it must be solved if reunion is ever to take place.

§ 17. Now, liberty is not an end in itself, though some would almost seem so to regard it. It means liberty *for* something, liberty *to do* something, and the justice and value of the liberty depends entirely upon what it is for. Liberty of franchise means liberty to express one's political desires and to seek to realise them through duly elected representatives. Liberty of trade means freedom to buy and sell in an open market where prices are regulated by supply and demand and value, and not by Government tariffs. Religious liberty means many things. It may mean liberty of conscience, liberty to form one's own religion, liberty of public worship, liberty of religious association and organisation, liberty to choose one's own ministers, even liberty to blaspheme. It is therefore by the purpose for which it is claimed, by the end which it seeks to realise, by the activities which it proposes to release that liberty must be judged; and for Christians that end is the propagation, the maintenance, and expression of Christian principles, by which in their belief faith should be guided, worship inspired, and the activities of men, individually or in corporate bodies, directed and controlled.

There lies the key to the solution, but the problem is not yet solved, for Free Churchmen uphold not merely liberty of conscience or liberty to preach and propagate and practise Christianity, but the liberty of comparatively small communities to believe and worship, and above all to organise, as *each* may think fit, and that on the ground that this liberty is inherent in Christianity. Consequently, they are averse not merely to tyranny and persecution, but even to a voluntary surrender of liberty for the sake of a higher end. They regard their liberty, in short, both personal and collective, as a sacred right which Christ has bestowed on humanity, a right which, after being lost for a time in the Middle Ages, has, thanks to the Protestant Reformation, at length been regained.

§ 18. A little reflection will show that historically this view is untenable. The Reformation was a struggle for religious liberty in a certain sense, but it was not a struggle for religious liberty in the sense in which Nonconformists commonly understand it. The Reformers were none of them Free Churchmen. They claimed neither that individual Christians, nor yet that communities of Christians, had a right to believe and worship and organise as they

wished. They claimed merely that everybody had a right to believe and to worship as the Gospel ordained, but *not otherwise.* Righteousness and truth were the ends which they professed to be seeking: the Bible the Book which defined them: the Spirit of God giving light and grace the means by which they must be attained. But what the Spirit of God taught through the Bible, though differently conceived by different groups, was to each of them clear and certain. It was *that* men had a right to believe and do, and that *only*. They had no liberty where the Gospel was concerned, nor even where any particular reformer's conception of the Gospel was concerned. If men would not accept truth and practise righteousness of their own free will, they must be forced to do so by law, and, should they resist, must be punished by the law and, if necessary, by the sword.

§ 19. All the leading reformers in all countries were firm believers in persecution, and in this were supported by their flocks. 'Kill and slay them like dogs,' writes Luther to the victorious princes in 1525 after the defeat of the peasants, whom his own doctrines had stirred to revolt. In 1526 at Zurich it was ordained by the Zwinglian council that recalcitrant Baptists should be drowned without mercy. In 1536 the Landgrave of Hesse, who had consulted Luther, Cruciger, Pomeranus, and Melancthon in regard to his treatment of the Anabaptists, was told to restrain and punish them with the sword; and punishment with the sword meant fines, floggings, brandings, imprisonment, death. In 1548 Calvin wrote to Somerset recommending the same treatment not only for those 'fanatical people who under cover of the Gospel would set all in confusion,' but also for 'stubborn people who persisted in the superstition of the Antichrist of Rome.' The Oxford Martyrs preached a like doctrine. Ridley urged Gardiner to 'be diligent in confounding of them who rise against the sacrament of the altar.' Latimer, hearing that these Sacramentarians 'went to their death, without any fear in the world, cheerfully,' wrote 'Well, let them go, the Donatists did the same.' It was Cranmer who hunted these people down, Cranmer's court that condemned them to death; while Knox described them as 'dissembling hypocrites, murderers, blasphemers, and accursed of God.' 'It is God's vengeance,' he said, 'that has come upon them, and by God's Word that they are condemned to die.'

The attitude of the Puritans is illustrated not only by their action toward Episcopalians and Papists and Quakers during the Commonwealth, but also by their action in the colony of Massachusetts where they admitted to citizenship only Church members, and tolerated neither episcopacy nor heresy. Even Separatists,

such as the Baptists and Brownists, at first held, so reads Henry Jacob's Confession in 1616, that 'all the visible Churches ought to be kept in order and peace, and ought to be governed, under Christ, both supremely and subordinately by the civil magistrate, yea, in causes of religion, where need is.'

§ 20. Religious toleration, then, is not a Reformation principle. It has grown up gradually as men have come to realise that persecution is futile and that religious differences are no proof of insincerity. Those most persecuted of all people, the Anabaptists, were the first to maintain it as a principle; but one of the first was Lord Baltimore, a convert to Catholicism, who, driven on that account into exile, founded the Province of Maryland, the constitution of which, unlike that of Massachusetts, declared that 'No person within this province, professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall be in any ways troubled, molested, or discountenanced for his or her religion, or in the free exercise thereof.'[1] William of Orange advocated toleration on the ground that it was impossible to blame Catholics for persecuting, if Protestants did the same. Cromwell introduced it into England, but extended it only to his own supporters. It was during his regime that Quakers complained that they were 'beaten, stocked, stoned, hauled out of their synagogues, cast into dungeons and noisome vaults, denied food for days together, not allowed pen, ink, or paper, and a legal trial refused or postponed for months or years.'[2] Free Churchmen, therefore, can hardly claim to be pioneers in the matter of religious toleration or freedom of conscience. Like everybody else, they claimed liberty of conscience first for themselves, and extended the principle to other people only little by little, first to those who differed from them only on minor points, and then to those who differed from them radically, as they became gradually convinced that first the one, and then the other, were no less sincere in their convictions than they were themselves.

§ 21. What is true of freedom of conscience is true also of the Free Church principle of separate and self-governing Christian communities. It is a growth. None of the great reformers believed in it, nor for that matter at first did any one at all. The aim of all reformers at the outset was to reform the Church Catholic, the whole of it, in accordance with Gospel principles as interpreted by themselves. They separated from the Church not on the ground that separate Churches are ordained by the Gospel, but of sheer necessity: the old Church had repudiated the new doctrines, and refused to be reformed. That several new Churches came into

[1] Green, *Short History of the English People*. 'Everyman's' Edit., p. 474.
[2] Hutton, *A History of the English Church* (Charles I to Anne), p. 175.

existence was an accident, due to the fact that there were many reformers. That these Churches did not unite to form one Church was due to the fact that the reformers differed in their doctrines. They tried to unite, but could not, because they were not agreed. Nobody held that there ought to be separate Churches. On the contrary, each Church held that there were not *many* true Churches, but one only, itself and those that were united with it, if not in fact, at any rate in principle.

§ 22. What is true of the Reformation in general, is true also of the Reformation in England. There was no widespread feeling against the polity of the Established Church, still less any widespread desire for separatism, during the reign of Elizabeth. The Puritans cried out against Popish garments, the surplice, rochet, tippet, and cape, against wafer-bread and the altar-wise position of the communion-table, against the cross at baptism, the ring at marriage, and kneeling communion. They protested also against pluralities, absentee incumbents, dumb ministers, the tyranny of ecclesiastical courts, and excommunication by laymen and for trifles. But they did not protest against bishops until they found that bishops were unwilling to reform either the Prayer Book, themselves, or abuses. Difficulties on this score began to appear when returning exiles from Geneva began to contrast the state of religion there with its deplorable state in England, and to attribute, rightly or wrongly, the success of Geneva to its system. There followed an attempt at Northampton to combine Genevan discipline with the English polity; to which Archbishop Parker replied by enforcing subscription to the Prayer Book, to the use of 'apparel,' and to the Thirty-nine Articles, into which had now been introduced an obnoxious phrase asserting the authority of the Church to determine rites and ceremonies and controversies of faith. The answer of the Puritans was that the Church had authority only in matters which Scripture declared to be indifferent; and the controverted ceremonies, contrary to advice from Zurich and Geneva, were fast coming to be regarded not as matters of indifference, but as matters which Scripture had already determined.

'An Admonition to Parliament,' published in 1572, shows the state of Puritan opinion in regard to episcopacy at this moment. It asks for the abolition of advowsons, patronages, and episcopal appointments, for which it would substitute 'that old and true election which was accustomed to be made by the congregation.' It complains of 'ignorant and unable ministers'; demands the appointment of 'learned and diligent preachers'; asks for the removal of 'homilies, articles, injunctions, and that prescript

order of service made out of the mass book'; urges the taking away of 'the lordship, the loitering, the pomp, the idleness, and livings of bishops'; and petitions for 'sitting communion, and for the restoration of excommunication to its former force.' The chief object of attack is still lax discipline, the neglect of preaching, and the objectionable features that Puritans found in the Prayer Book. Episcopal conduct is attacked, but there is no question yet of the substitution of another form of polity.

§ 23. The Government still remained immovable. The authors of this Admonition were imprisoned; bishops inveighed against it; and Parliament, which was proposing to reform rites and ceremonies, was told by the Queen to mind its own business. Yet the document was popular and was widely read; Field and Wilcox became 'martyrs'; while Burghley, though remarking the need of reform, did nothing except urge the bishops to convent recalcitrant ministers and to suppress a printing press which they could not discover. The setting up of a Court of Ecclesiastical Commission in 1583 to enforce subscription to the Prayer Book as containing nothing contrary to the Word of God, and the administration by the bishops of an *ex officio* oath compelling accused persons to incriminate themselves, served only to make the Prayer Book and the episcopal system yet more unpopular. A fresh manifesto was issued in 1584 entitled 'A learned Discourse on Ecclesiastical Government.' It claimed that doctors and pastors should deal with doctrine, governors and deacons with discipline; recommended a seignory of elders to correct the faults of the congregation, and a local synod to settle controversies and appeals and to co-operate with the congregation in the choice of pastors. In 1587 there was a proposal in Parliament to substitute Knox's Form of Common Prayers for the Anglican form, and a *Humble Petition of the Communaltie* to the Queen denouncing the bishops. The Queen would not hear of any alteration, and Peter Wentworth went to the Tower. Yet it is admitted even by an Anglican historian that at this time 'the bishops, with a few exceptions, were men of such indifferent or squalid reputation that they would have failed to commend even the best of causes.'[1]

§ 24. The 'Marprelate Tracts' followed. Separatism sprang into existence. Two of its leaders, Barrow and Greenwood, were executed. Yet though Browne and Barrow and Greenwood are usually instanced as the earliest of English Free Churchmen, the *main* ground of their separation was not that they believed in Free Churches, nor yet that they repudiated Episcopacy on principle. It was simply that they felt the urgent need of a more thorough

[1] Frere, *History of the English Church*, 1558–1625, p. 233.

reformation both of discipline and worship, and were convinced that this reformation could never be obtained from within. Browne held that a Christian Church should consist of 'the worthiest, were they never so few,' and that there could be no Church without 'outward discipline' and 'the power to separate the unworthy.' The Anglican Church refused to act on this principle. Therefore, as an advocate of 'reformation without tarrying for any,' he quitted it in anger and disgust. His own polity, formed after his separation, was democratic, though he still admitted that the authority of many Churches must be greater than that of the few. But the ground of his separation was not polity, but policy, not the presence of theological error, but the need of a moral reformation. Barrow, during his examination, gave similar reasons for his separation: (1) the Anglican Church contained all the profane and wicked of the land; (2) its ministry was anti-Christian; (3) its worship was idolatrous and superstitious; (4) its government was Romish. Like Browne, he urged that without the 'holy power of Christ to censure and redress faults and offenders, there can be no Church, no ministry, no communion.' Greenwood took precisely the same view, alleging that the Church of England consisted of 'all sorts of profane people who were, by the blowing of her Majesty's trumpet at her coronation, in one day received, without conversion of life by faith or repentance.' The Free Church principle, in the strict sense of that term, had not yet come into existence. Those who left the Anglican Establishment did so because they regarded it from the moral point of view as both unreformed and irreformable. But they were not as yet by any means sure what would be the best polity to adopt in place of the old one. Their Free Churchmanship was of the nature of an experiment.

§ 25. Under the Stuarts the hope that reform might come from within gave place at length to despair. The thousand ministers who presented to James the Millenary Petition, still demanded not the abolition of Episcopacy, but a redress of grievances in the shape of the controverted ceremonies, dumb ministers, pluralities, and the maladministration of discipline. Similar demands were made at the Hampton Court Conference. The King, dreading the introduction of even a semblance of Presbyterianism, refused to listen to them, and threatened to harry out of the land all who refused to conform. With the aid of the High Commission Court he did so, with the result that refugees flocked to Holland and America. It was there that Free Churches proper were first established. The ministers who were driven into exile gathered around themselves each a little flock, which through force of circum-

stances rather than of purpose intent, became an 'independent' congregation. These congregations prospered in spite of many hardships. The emigrants came to believe in them, and with the advent of the civil war returned in many cases to the home country to advocate 'the New England way.'

Meanwhile in England matters from the Puritan point of view had been going from bad to worse. Uniformity was now being enforced by means of fines, imprisonment, mutilation, banishment, and torture; while the new Primate, Laud, instead of yielding to the demands for reform, sought rather to make Anglicanism more ritualistic. In addition, the 'prelatical party' were the strongest supporters of the despotism of the King. It was against this despotism, royal and ecclesiastical, that the Puritans were fighting. They had not at first raised any serious objection either to monarchy or to episcopacy or to a state religion. They had come to object to all these things because together they stood, in their view, for an unbearable tyranny, and when the civil war was won, they abolished them *en bloc*.

§ 26. With the rights and wrongs of this fierce struggle we are not concerned. What we are concerned with is that, driven into separation by what they regarded as tyranny, it became necessary for the seceders to replace the old polity, to which they attributed that tyranny, by another. Two alternatives offered themselves, Presbyterianism and the 'New England way.' The Presbyterian polity had never caught on in England in spite of the strenuous advocacy of Cartwright. The 'classes' that had sprung up in various towns in Elizabeth's time existed within the Church and sought to train capable preachers rather than to introduce a new system of government. Under the Commonwealth the Church of England was indeed transformed into a Presbyterian Establishment for the moment, but the change was made rather to please the Scots than because any considerable body of Englishmen were enthusiastically in favour of it. To the majority of Reformers it seemed that 'new presbyter was but old priest, writ large.' What the majority wanted was liberty, and this 'the New England way' promised them. At the beginning of Charles's reign Separatists and Independents were almost unheard of. By the time that the Commonwealth was established, they had become so strong that the new Government was forced to grant them toleration. Free Churchmanship had come into existence, and had come to stay; but belief in it as a system of Church government was the outcome, not of Gospel teaching, but of the bitter experience of the tyranny of a state religion, which in the eyes of the Puritans was bound up with government by bishops and was contrasted by home-coming

exiles with that other and very different experience which they had acquired in New England.

With the Restoration, disgusted by the worse tyranny of Cromwell and the widespread chaos that ensued on his death, most Englishmen might even now have been content to return to the re-established religion of the Prayer Book, had Parliament been willing to make those reforms which the Puritans had so long and so persistently demanded. Instead, they solemnly burnt the League and Covenant, refused to adopt the reforms recommended by Archbishop Usher and the Savoy Conference, canonised the martyr-tyrant, and not only enforced the Prayer Book, but demanded unfeigned assent and consent to its contents from all ministers. As a result the Free Churches gained by the accession of two thousand of the Anglican Clergy. The long persecution that followed only served to convince them of the justice of the step they had at length reluctantly taken, and to weld together yet closer the ideas of Free Churchmanship and liberty.

§ 27. The story of later secessions from the Established Churches is precisely similar. The seceders, having failed to reform the parent Church from within, adopted Separatism as the only means by which their ideals could be realised. Neither Erskine, Gillespie, nor Chalmers would have left the Established Church of Scotland, had it been possible to obtain the much needed reforms that they sought, without secession. Nor would Wesley have left the Anglican Church, had his Evangelical method and organisation been approved by it. Nor yet again would those numerous secessions from the Wesleyan body have taken place, had the laity been granted a voice in the Conference, or the revivalist methods of Hugh Bourne and William O'Bryan been approved. The latter, in fact, did not leave the Connection, but were expelled, and O'Bryan, who petitioned to come back, was told that he could do so only if he gave up the work to which he believed that God had called him. All these men founded independent and self-governing organisations; but they did so, not because they believed in separate organisations, but because the old ones were hampered by state interference, lay patronage, and closed conferences, and because by them the reforms that were demanded were—rightly or wrongly—refused.

§ 28. Polity is only a means to an end, and as such has been recognised by the Free Churches throughout the long course of their history. That *de facto* their polities differ is due to the circumstances in which the Free Churches arose. Disgusted with episcopacy and determined to separate, the Puritans had to choose a new polity. Some chose Presbyterianism; others basing their

choice on the experience of the New Englanders, chose independent and self-governing congregations. Seceders from Established Presbyterianism in Scotland kept its polity. Wesleyan seceders from the Anglican communion substituted for the Anglican polity their already existing system of circuits and conferences and itinerant preachers, merely granting to the latter the right to administer the sacraments. In America also the connectional system was maintained, but in one branch of the new Church episcopacy was superimposed upon it. All these polities have, in the opinion of those who have inherited them, worked well. Therefore they are reluctant to part with, or change them, and corporate reunion would involve such a change.

§ 29. But, if history explains how the difficulty has come to be, it also suggests the solution. 'Who cares for the Free Churches,' said Chalmers, 'except as an instrument of Christian good'? Of none of them can it be said that they came into being because their founders thought that Christian Churches should be independent one of the other. They sought independence on the ground of Christian good, and for the sake of Christian good must independence be sacrificed. Only thus can they hope to realise Christ's will, and only thus can they restore to a distraught Christianity the unity that is necessary to its subsistence. It will mean the adoption of episcopacy? Doubtless; but it was not against episcopacy as such that their forefathers revolted, but against episcopacy as an obstacle to reform. The Anglican Church is willing for the sake of reunion to reform both herself and her episcopate. She insists merely upon the acceptance of an episcopal polity and promises to remodel it on democratic lines. For us who are Catholics, episcopacy originated with the apostles themselves, who handed on the plenitude of their sacramental power to men such as Timothy and Polycarp, and only through such tradition, constant and inviolate, is sacramental power handed down. But the Anglican Church has never committed herself to this position, but has ever been tolerant of the contrary. Consequently she can proffer the olive branch of compromise without in any way renouncing her traditions. So also can Free Churchmen accept the proffered olive branch without being false to their traditions. Had the democratic proposals of the Puritans been adopted, there would have been no need for a second reformation, and, in consequence, there would have been no Free Churches. To-day, the Anglican episcopate, in the event of reunion, is not only to become democratic, but is to be accepted apart from any theory as to its character. That is even more than the Puritans dared to ask for. In submitting

to episcopacy, thus proffered and reformed, Free Churchmen will not in reality be making concessions: they will be celebrating a glorious victory.

(ii) *The Problem of Order.*

§ 30. The acceptance of no particular view on the nature of episcopacy inevitably involves the acceptance of no particular view on the nature of order. The problem of order, therefore, should *ipso facto* be solved by the proposal that episcopacy should be accepted without any theory as to its character. It may, however, be worth while to consider for a moment whether the view of order which prevails amongst Free Churchmen is compatible with that which the Anglican Church has set forth in her Articles.

Question 39 of the Free Church Catechism states that 'a Christian minister is one who is called of God and the Church to be a teacher of the Word and a pastor of the flock of Christ.' The call of God is inward: the call of the Church authenticates it, and 'is followed,' so reads the Declaratory Statement of the Oxford Conference,[1] 'by ordination to the ministry in the name of the Church.' Unfortunately ordination to the ministry in the Free Churches is by no means a universal practice. Many regard vocation and the call of the Church as sufficient, and the call of the Church may consist merely in an invitation to the pastorate given by some particular congregation. The reason of this is that the ministry, as conceived by Free Churchmen, is not a 'sacerdotal order,' but an 'office.' Consequently, the rite by which normally men are appointed to this office is not sacramental, but merely symbolic. It conveys no power, neither is it necessary for validity, for the 'decisive proof of a valid ministry' for the Free Churchman is 'the sanction of the Divine Head of the Church as manifested in the conversion of sinners and the edification of the Body of Christ.'[2] Ordinarily men are allocated by the Church for the work of the ministry by the laying on of hands, but the Declaratory Statement of the Free Churches does not limit the ministry to those who have thus been ordained. It affirms 'the priesthood of all believers and the obligation resting upon them to fulfil their vocation according to the gift bestowed upon them by the Holy Spirit.' That gift, as Free Churchmen conceive it, is bestowed independently of ordination, and when recognised in anyone by the aforesaid manifest signs, the Church, or a particular congrega-

[1] Shakespeare, *The Churches at the Cross-roads*, Appendix II, p. 217.
[2] *Free Church Catechism*, Q. 40.

tion, may call such an one to exercise his gift, and may permit him to do so, if it chooses, without any previous laying on of hands.

§ 31. With this view of order, the doctrine of the Articles, if taken in 'their literal and grammatical sense,' is not incompatible. They make a clear distinction between the two 'sacraments ordained of Christ,' Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are 'not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather . . . be certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace and of God's good will towards us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us,' and 'those five commonly called sacraments,' of which Order is one but which

> are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of a corrupt following of the apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the gospel, . . . and have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.[1]

And for the valid administration of the two sacraments that are genuine all they require is that those who administer them be 'lawfully called and sent by publick authority.'[2] This is precisely the Nonconformist position, which admits that Baptism and the Lord's Supper 'confirm the promises and gifts of salvation'; affirms that, when rightly used by believers, they are 'through the operation of the Holy Ghost true means of grace';[3] and requires that in order lawfully to be administered in the Congregation the minister must be 'called and sent.' What the Free Churchman does not admit is that the particular method of calling and sending, approved by the XXXVI Article and prescribed by the Ordinal as the only method permissible in the Anglican Church, is necessary for validity; and this neither the Articles nor the Ordinal claim. To insist, therefore, upon the acceptance of any theory as to the character either of episcopacy or of order as a point of faith would be both inconsistent and unjust.

§ 32. On the other hand, to admit ministers who have not been ordained at all, or have been ordained only in Churches which do not even lay claim to apostolic succession in this matter, would not only be contrary to the decree of the Ordinal, but would also be inconsistent with the almost universal practice of the Anglican Church, and to the vast majority of its members would be a serious stumbling-block. Whatever one may say of the Anglican doctrine, as officially declared, and whatever attitude ought to be taken up in regard to Presbyterian orders which are manifestly not in the

[1] Article XXV. [2] Article XXIII.

[3] Statement of Faith by Oxford Conference. Shakespeare, *The Churches at the Cross-roads*, p. 211.

same case, undoubtedly the more general feeling amongst Anglicans is that reordination in the case of Free Churchmen, other than Presbyterians, should be a *sine qua non* of re-union.

§ 33. Would Nonconformist ministers submit to this? Probably not, at any rate in the case of ministers of the older generation. Yet there are reasons why they should do so apart from the question of peace, and of legality in the sense of action in accordance with the laws of a National Church. Their own theory of orders is not quite consistent. They believe in the universal priesthood of all Christians. So do we all, in the sense that we are all brethren of Christ, our High Priest, can all offer sacrifice through Him, and are all called to some sort of apostolic work at least through the ministry of prayer. But there are special vocations and special gifts, bestowed upon different people by the Holy Spirit to correspond with their vocations. This Free Churchmen admit, as also that one of these gifts is the ministry of the sacraments. But in the New Testament there is no evidence for the bestowing of this particular gift except through the laying on of hands. Neither is it possible to test this gift, except in general, by that decisive proof of a valid ministry which the Free Church Catechism suggests, namely, its manifestation in the conversion of sinners and in the edification of the Body of Christ. This test is applicable to a preacher of the Word and also to a pastor of Christ's flock, but it is not applicable to a minister of the sacraments, for sacraments work not outwardly as do preachers and pastors, but invisibly in the soul, and often unconsciously also. That presumably is one of the reasons why the New Testament in this case gives us another kind of test by which we may discern the spirits that minister to us. For the laying on of hands was not required, so far as we know, in order that a man might receive the gift of prophecy, but it was required in order that a man might receive the Holy Ghost for the work of the Christian ministry.

§ 34. Nor did that party within the Anglican Church from which the Free Churches have sprung either countenance or encourage lax views in this matter. On the contrary the early Puritans, while objecting to the Anglican rite of ordination as savouring of Popery, believed firmly in Genevan orders, which were conveyed by the laying on of hands. Indeed, so strict were their views on this matter that at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign one of their complaints was that the Anglican Church permitted Baptism to be administered by those who were not in orders and sometimes even by women. Laxity in this matter is not a Free Church principle, but is the product of circumstances for which the Anglican Church itself is largely responsible. It began long before

the schism, and in the days of Laud laxity in both theory and practice was prevalent throughout the English Church, a fact that is not surprising seeing that the Articles said nothing of the necessity of ordination, but on the contrary suggested that it was an abuse.[1]

The transformation of the Mass into a Communion Service, the subordinate place assigned to it in the Prayer Book, and the custom of administering it in many churches only two or three times a year also tended to lower public esteem for that other sacrament which the possibility of this one supposes. Add to this that in the Church of England religion seemed to the Puritans to be becoming merely a matter of form, that preaching in their view was grossly neglected, that patronage was abused, that many undoubtedly became ministers merely for the sake of the stipend, and the explanation is complete. In his anxiety to obtain a preaching ministry and a zealous pastorate the Nonconformist almost forgot that ministers are also appointed for another function, the ministration of sacraments. As a consequence sacraments became more and more neglected and with them the laying on of hands, which in Anglican teaching conveys 'authority' and in Catholic teaching 'grace or power' to administer sacraments. A Free Church minister became simply 'one who is called of God and the Church to be a *teacher* of the Word and a *pastor* of the flock of Christ,' as the Free Church Catechism (forgetting Question 34 where it has included the ministry of the sacraments amongst the ends for which Christ founded His Church) still defines him.[2] The stress which Nonconformists rightly lay upon divine vocation and their claim that congregations have a right to refuse ministers who obviously have no such vocation, has tended to produce a like result. The emphasis all along has been on preaching, not on sacraments, and on the need of a call from God and the congregation, not on the act by which the Church as a whole ratifies that call and sends forth the minister with power from on high to execute his functions. Since, therefore, zeal for souls and the power of preachers to stir the hearts of their people does not depend directly upon ordination, while to that which does depend upon ordination Free Churchmen have paid but little attention and of its value have had but little experience, naturally ordination is held by them in but little esteem and the test of a valid ministry is looked for elsewhere, namely, in that spiritual eloquence and zeal in which for the Free Churchman its validity in practice consists.

§ 35. Yet belief in the efficacy of the sacraments is reviving, especially in that of the Supper, and with it greater care in the

[1] Cf. Article XXV. [2] Question 39.

laying on of hands. For the two go together. Free Churchmen do not recognise ordination as the test of a valid ministry because what they seek to test is not sacramental power, but the power of the teacher and pastor. Yet they are coming to believe in this sacramental power, of which their Catechism still contains mention, and so to believe also in the necessity for laying on of hands.

Does it yet mean anything for Free Churchmen, this laying on of hands? Or is it still merely a ceremony? If it does mean anything, as it unquestionably did mean in Apostolic times; if by it the Holy Ghost is given invisibly, as He was given sometimes visibly and sometimes invisibly in the days of the Apostles, then surely Free Churchmen ought also to believe in the great antecedent position. Authority can be given only by him that hath authority, power by him that hath power. This particular power was first given by Christ to His Apostles, and in its fulness was bestowed by the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. From that time to this it has been handed down by the laying on of the hands of those that possess it. There is no indication in Scripture that it can be obtained merely by prayer or in any other way except that which the Apostles adopted and which the Holy Ghost at first by visible manifestations confirmed. Free Churchmen, through excessive zeal for other things, have neglected this sacramental gift, and with it the rite by which alone it can be obtained. In the opinion of Presbyterians no less than of Anglicans, nay, except for themselves, in the opinion of the whole Christian world, the succession in their case has been broken and must be restored before there can exist amongst them decisive proof of a valid ministry in regard to that much neglected function. It would be restored in the opinion of Anglicans and Presbyterians if they submitted to ordination by Anglican bishops.

This is not the only way, perhaps. And technically the Anglican Church would not be justified in asking this sacrifice except on grounds of legality. But it is the best way, and the only way that will satisfy the troubled consciences of multitudes of Anglicans. Free Churchmen do not believe in the necessity of the Anglican rite. They are not asked to do so. They are asked merely to submit to appointment to a national office by means of a national form of procedure which Parliament has approved, and which in its present form is so far from being 'popish' that the Pope himself has declared that in a 'popish' sense it is invalid. Should they consent to do so, they will not be going back upon, but will be returning to the ways of their fathers, from which they admit that in this respect they have seriously departed.

(iii) *The Question of a Liturgy.*

§ 36. Other difficulties of less import are connected with the question of a Liturgy. The Free Churches have no set form of Morning or Evening Prayer, practically no psalm-singing, and no litany. To these elements in the Prayer Book, however, there was never any serious objection. Neither was there any widespread complaint against the Anglican Communion service, which, except for a few prayers, is substantially the same as that of which Free Churchmen themselves make use. It was the ceremonies of the Prayer Book that chiefly were in question, together with the wearing of clerical dress, on neither of which scores is there likely to be a serious difficulty now. Free Churchmen would doubtless object to the Ornaments rubric, were it proposed that that should be enforced, but no one has any scruple now about putting on a ring at marriage, and, as Free Church ministers are to be seen to-day in Roman collars, they can hardly find fault with a surplice. To a Liturgy it may be objected that it is apt to become a formality, but so also may the reading of Scripture become, and the singing of anthems and hymns. Kneeling for communion also might prove a stumbling-block for some, but the Black Rubric should salve their consciences here, and, if necessary, there is also a precedent in the Anglican Church for the Nonconformist practice, which was presumably that of the Last Supper. Extempore prayer would of a surety be demanded both by English and by Scottish Free Churchmen, for which scope could easily be provided either during the service or on special occasions. On the other hand, Anglicans would demand of Free Churchmen greater respect for antiquity and for the psalms, which in the Free Churches have come to be sadly neglected.

§ 37. The way out in all these cases has already been suggested by the principles of Cranmer's Prefaces. Ceremonies, he says, in themselves are but small things, which ' (upon just causes) may be altered and changed, and therefore are not to be esteemed equal with God's law,' yet ' without some ceremonies it is not possible to keep any order or quiet discipline in the Church.' With both these principles all Protestants are in substantial agreement. Catholics are not, for they hold that the ceremonies abrogated by the Prayer Book are vital to the expression of Catholic faith; but with Catholics, for the moment, we are not concerned. Protestants would also have little difficulty in assenting to the further proposition that ' every country should use such ceremonies as they shall think best for the setting forth of God's honour and

glory and to the reducing of the people to a most perfect and godly living, without error or superstition'; but it must, of course, be the National Church as a whole, inclusive of the Free Churches, that is to settle the general Order of Service and Ceremonial, though the Prayer Book will naturally form the basis. The way out is also suggested by the Prefaces should difficulties arise after the reunion has taken place. 'The parties that so doubt or diversely take anything, shall always resort to the Bishop of the Diocese, who by his discretion shall take order for the quieting and appeasing of the same'; only the Bishop in this case must be the constitutional one, promised by the Joint Conference on Faith and Order, who will act in conjunction with his clergy and people, and consult the wishes not merely of incumbents, but of their congregations. Variety of usage will be inevitable, but the Anglican Church already tolerates variety of usage, and the difference between a Free Church and a Prayer Book service is as nothing compared to the difference between that service and the usage of one who follows the Roman Missal.

(iv) *The Question of Church Membership.*

§ 38. The earlier schisms of Browne and Barrow and Greenwood differ from the larger secession under James, and from the great secession in 1662, in that the primary cause of the former was the theory that only the righteous should be members of the Church. This theory was never formally adopted by the Puritan party, but in practice it obtained in many of the seceding Churches. Baptists and Congregationalists, in fact, still act upon it to-day; so also do Wesleyans; all of whom admit to Church membership only those who, upon examination, are judged to have been truly converted. The formal act of admission is baptism, which signifies at once the change of heart that has taken place and the faith that has wrought this change. Many now admit that in baptism grace also is conveyed to the soul; but the stress is still on the moral aspect—not on the grace conferred, but on the inward conversion which is signified and is supposed to have *already* taken place. Hence the custom of not baptizing infants, a growing tendency to regard baptism as unnecessary even in the case of adults, and, on the other hand, an immense esteem for the value and fruit of revivalist movements.

In the practice of the Anglican, and of all the older Churches, the stress in all sacraments is not on any change of consciousness that may precede or result from them, but on the fact of grace conferred. Baptism, therefore, is administered to infants, who thus become

members of the Christian family right from the start. The profession of Christian faith and the promise to live a Christian life are regarded merely as conditions for receiving it, and, in the case of infants, are made by proxy, the godparents undertaking to see to the best of their ability that these promises are fulfilled. It is on what God does, not on any conscious act on man's part, that the emphasis lies; and this surely is reasonable, if sacraments *confer* grace, and if grace is a real power enabling man to do what otherwise he could not, as all Christians believe. The other aspect which is emphasised in revivalist movements is not neglected, but, on the contrary, is encouraged, at any rate in the Catholic Church, for all men may fall away from God. But the conversions that result are held to be *re*-vivals of Christian faith, not its commencement. Neither in the practice of the older Churches are the unrighteous excluded, but rather are retained, in the hope that some day they may be converted.

§ 39. For this practice the sanction of primitive Christianity can justly be claimed. Christ expressly includes within the kingdom of heaven good as well as bad fish, cockle as well as wheat, goats as well as sheep, and foolish virgins as well as wise. It is only when the bridegroom comes at the last day that they will be separated. Again, the practice of the Apostles was to receive and baptize thousands in one day, and sometimes whole families, in which case to test the sincerity of individuals, or even to instruct them, was clearly impossible. Moreover, some of the early Christians did fall away from the practice of their religion, though still retaining their faith, as the letters of St. Paul clearly show us. Conversion, in fact, in the moral sense, is regarded by St. Paul precisely as it is regarded by the older Churches to-day; it is possible, and may be necessary, in men who are *already* baptized and professing Christians; it consists in the revivifying of faith, already possessed, but for the moment dormant in practice; it is not as a rule an instantaneous change, but a process; and to foster and further this process is one of the chief aims of St. Paul's writings; yet the absence of a living faith, and even serious delinquencies, do not of themselves exclude from the Christian Church, and only in extreme cases, where the gravest scandal has been given, is excommunication held to be justifiable.

§ 40. When more closely examined, however, the practice of the Free Churches and of the Anglican Church are not so irreconcilable as at first sight they may seem to be. Both admit in practice an inner and an outer circle. For Free Churchmen the inner circle comprises Church members, the outer circle those who merely attend church, regularly or on occasion. The latter are not

called Church members, and are not necessarily baptized, but they are admitted to Holy Communion, if they choose to partake of it, as they are invited to do. In the Anglican Church the inner circle consists of regular communicants, who are usually, in addition, members of some Church society or organisation. The outer circle comprises those who have been baptized, but do not practise, at any rate regularly. At the root of these differences lies a difference in attitude toward the sacraments, and once the Free Churches admit in theory as well as in practice that sacraments confer grace, they should right themselves. But, for the moment, diversity of practice must endure. The question of infant baptism will have to be left to the discretion of parents, and that of baptism by immersion to the discretion of individuals or of particular congregations. So also will the practice of recommending 'all who love the Lord Jesus Christ' to partake of communion. It was not the apostolic practice, and to those who believe in the Real Presence seems incongruous, especially in view of St. Paul's emphatic warning about the danger of eating to oneself damnation. True, if one really love the Lord Jesus Christ, one is already baptized 'by desire,' and it is doubtless on this ground that 'Free Catholics,' though believing in the Real Presence, retain in this respect the Free Church custom. But 'baptism by desire' does not fulfil all justice. Neither does it confer grace in the same way that baptism proper does. The practice of giving communion to persons who are not baptized, then, can at best be but a temporary expedient, which will inevitably disappear, should the necessity of obeying Christ's command and the value of the sacrament He instituted again become universally recognised. There can only be one right way in all these matters, and it will prevail, once faith is restored. So also will a right attitude and practice in regard to the sacraments help to restrain excesses in revivalism. Meanwhile the reunited Church will have to be tolerant toward old differences, and, if new reformers arise with new methods, or emotion is publicly displayed, must bear with it in patience, lest schism again be the result.

(v) *The Problem of Establishment.*

§ 41. A free Church is defined by the Free Church Catechism as 'a Church which acknowledges none but Jesus Christ as its head, and, therefore, exercises its right to interpret and administer His laws without restraint or control by the State.'[1] This defi-

[1] Q. 36.

nition does not necessarily exclude the idea of Establishment, but it does exclude the idea of State Control, and in doing so lays down a fundamental Christian principle for which the Christian Church has had to fight ever since the day when, by the conversion of Constantine, a Christian State came into existence. Any infringement of the Church's right to interpret and administer Christ's laws, is, as Scottish Free Churchmen justly claim, 'a violation of the Crown rights of Jesus Christ.'

Previous to the Reformation the Crown rights of Jesus Christ were vested in the Church Catholic, of which the English Church was an integral part; but in the reign of Henry VIII this part of the Church handed over its rights to the temporal power, in whose hands they have since remained. It is true that what the English Church did between 1530 and 1535, it did under protest and with the utmost reluctance, hardly realising at the time what was meant by the legislation to which it assented. Nevertheless, it did assent. It is also true that it repented, and, repudiating under Mary the system that Henry had forced upon it, became once again a living part of the Church Catholic. But under pressure from Elizabeth it repented of its repentance. Once again it renounced its rights, this time more willingly, though all its bishops, save one, resisted and were deposed, and many of its clergy, and still more of its people, seceded from the National Church, choosing rather to remain in the world-wide communion. It is true also that those who afterwards became known as the Puritan party, not only did not protest against this surrender of Christian privileges, but, on the contrary, welcomed it with enthusiasm for the sake of the changes brought with it. Only later, when they came to realise what Royal Supremacy involved, did they repudiate it.

§ 42. First let us recount the facts. By their act of submission in 1532, the English clergy promised to make no new canons, constitutions or ordinances without the King's licence, and submitted to him all past legislation, which was to be approved or abolished according as he and his commissioners judged it to be in conformity with or opposed to God's laws. By acknowledging the King's Supremacy and the validity of the Acts that enforced and to some extent defined it, they granted to him the right of visitation; assigned to him the function of reforming and redressing all heresies, abuses, etc., 'which by any manner spiritual authority ought or may lawfully be reformed, redressed, etc.'; and made him the supreme court of appeal from bishops' courts, 'like as in case of appeal from the Admiral's court.' In other words, in place of the Pope the English Church had substituted the King, whom it was henceforth to acknowledge—to quote the words of

Stubbs—as 'fountain of all authority and ordinary of ordinaries.' Henry had not only got rid of the Pope, but in his own person had taken over the whole of the papal prerogatives.

§ 43. Nor was this any mere idle claim on Henry's part. In virtue of the Supremacy that had been granted to him, he not only pocketed papal revenues, but forthwith began to exercise papal functions: appointed Cromwell his Vicar General in spiritual affairs; gave him precedence of the Archbishop of Canterbury; caused him to preside at Convocation; exercised through him the right of visitation, which he withdrew from the bishops; made him, in short, his legate *a latere*. Next, acting on the reports which his disreputable visitors brought in, he proceeded to suppress various Catholic institutions, practices, and customs; first the smaller monasteries; then the bigger ones, some three thousand in all; then pilgrimages and shrines, which were reported as having been abused; incidentally destroying images, relics, and stained glass windows. This done, he took the question of faith in hand; 'devised,' one after another, no less than four different declarations of the faith of the English Church; issued an English Bible and an English Litany; caused the Pope's name to be erased from all Missals and Breviaries; suppressed a certain number of holidays of obligation; permitted the publication of a number of semi-official and quasi-Protestant manuals of devotion; licensed or refused to license preachers, as he thought fit, defining for them the subject of their discourses; and by Act of Parliament forced Chapters to elect, and Archbishops to consecrate, his nominees to vacant bishoprics.

Fisher and More were right. Royal Supremacy did mean spiritual supremacy, whole, blatant, and arbitrarily exercised. But what could the Church do now? There were those who defended the Crown rights of Christ's Church, but they speedily went to the scaffold or stake. There was a Pilgrimage of Grace, but it was first held up by specious promises and then ruthlessly suppressed. There were Papists without number, but there were also ubiquitous spies. The deed was done, the oath taken, and resistance now was futile. In acknowledging the supremacy of the King, the English Church had not only placed itself in schism, but had surrendered its independence and torn up its birthright. It had not only renounced papal jurisdiction and substituted for it that of the Crown, but had conferred upon the Crown a power such as no Pope had ever claimed, still less exercised. It had exchanged comparative freedom, under an ecclesiastical and elective head, for abject slavery under a tyrannical and hereditary monarch. It had placed itself, its faith, its worship, its sacraments, its institutions,

its rights and liberties henceforth at the disposal of the Crown to do with as greed or policy should suggest.

§ 44. And in the next reign the Crown did do with the faith, the worship, the sacraments, and the institutions of the Church as greed and policy dictated. Acting on the advice of the few and in direct violation of the desires of the many, it first suppressed by Royal Injunction ancient rites and ceremonies and made experiment with new ones; and then by the Act of a subservient Parliament substituted for the Missal and Breviary the Prayer Book, for the Roman Pontifical an Anglican Ordinal, and for the ancient faith that of the Forty-two Articles—all of them, Prayer Book, Ordinal, and Articles, drawn up by one man, Cranmer, assisted by a few friends, and advised by a handful of foreign reformers. Protestants rejoiced, but their children of the third generation were to rue the day in which, by such a method and by such an authority, the religion of old England had been transformed.

§ 45. It is sometimes pointed out that Elizabeth, who, in many respects, returned to the ways of her father and brother, did not call herself Supreme Head of the Church, but merely its supreme Governor. It is true: she first included her Supremacy under an 'etc.', then substituted for the title that had shocked even Luther, the less offensive title of 'Governor'; but 'the Supremacy or Primacy,' which was the thing that mattered, remained, and throughout the reign was vigorously enforced. In her Declaration of 1570 the Queen protested that 'she made no claim to define the faith or change the ceremonial from the form before received in the Catholic and Apostolic Church.' Yet she had already done so, and continued to do so throughout the reign. By proclamation at the beginning of the reign she ordered communion in both kinds, required the Mass to be said in English in her own chapel, and forbade the elevation. A little later, ignoring the protest of Convocation, and in spite of the bishops, who were unanimously opposed to any change, she constrained a reluctant, though carefully packed parliament to abolish papal jurisdiction and restore the Prayer Book. She also by Royal Injunctions ordered all to submit to this 'change of religion,' and bade all 'confess and acknowledge the Prayer Book to be according to the true Word of God and agreeable to the doctrine of the Primitive Church.' Again, by the same Injunctions, she forbade the use of images, relics, and processions; permitted the clergy to marry wives approved by their bishops; commanded them to wear cassock, gown, and priest's square cap; licensed preachers and schoolmasters; ordered attendance at church, reverence and attention whilst there, and uncovering of heads when the name of Jesus was pro-

nounced. She also regulated the kind of music to be used; prescribed the destruction of all shrines, pictures, paintings, and objects of superstition; added to the Prayer Book a new bidding-prayer; required that all altars should be taken down and tables set up; and directed the use of wafer bread, slightly thicker and plainer than had hitherto been usual. She it was, too, who by a quasi-papal decree supplied all defects—and there were many—in the consecration of Archbishop Parker.

§ 46. Her authority in matters of faith was no less supreme. In 1563 she authorised the Thirty-nine Articles, but in virtue of her Supremacy cut out Article XXIX on the Lord's Supper, and added to Article XX a phrase on Church authority, in spite of the fact that these articles had already been approved by both Parliament and the bishops. In 1565 she refused to authorise Articles drawn up by bishops; in 1566 refused to allow Parliament to ratify the Thirty-nine Articles, though the bishops advised this; again refused to allow Parliament to deal with the matter in 1571, asserting that she would by her own supremacy have the Articles executed by the bishops; but finally gave way and allowed them to be by law established and enforced. Frequently, too, did she quash attempts at liturgical reform, telling Parliament that it was the clergy's business to set right what was amiss. Yet the clergy could do nothing without her, and nothing with her, for she did as she pleased. Against their will she excluded their wives and children from cathedral precincts, and regulated their outdoor dress. In 1571 when Convocation passed canons, she approved and amended them, but refused to give them statutory force. When more were submitted in 1576, she authorised them, but first cut out one allowing marriage in Lent, and another which gave the bishops interpretative power to solve doubts in regard to the Prayer Book. In 1585 she approved another set of canons, but eliminated one which gave the bishops the right to reject a patron's nominee. It was her business, she said, to set the faults of the clergy in order, and her business also to depose bishops if they did not amend. The bishops were powerless in her hands. She was forever telling them to stand on their own legs, but when they tried to do so, as at the beginning of the reign, she got rid of them and appointed others in their stead. Similarly, when Grindal rebuked her for interfering in matters of faith, she sequestered him. On the one hand, she was ever blaming the bishops for all disorders and urging them to severer measures, and, on the other, she was constantly letting them down when they did as she bade them, and threatening them with deprivation if they acted without her authority. Was it any wonder that, under such circumstances,

Barrow should have told the Archbishop of Canterbury that he was ' neither ecclesiastical nor civil,' and that he knew not what to make of him; or, again, that in an institution so erastian neither Barrow, on the one hand, nor the Recusants, on the other, should have recognised a branch of the true Church ?

§ 47. The Stuarts supported the authority of their bishops more loyally than did Elizabeth, but they never for a moment forgot that in themselves rested the supreme authority in matters both spiritual and temporal, or that it was their duty as kings to rule ' the Church under them.' It was James who, by letters patent, authorised the changes that were introduced into the Prayer Book in 1604, and refused to allow further changes. It was he who judged between conflicting parties, now more or less evenly divided, and, by issuing directions as to preaching, prescribing silence on controverted points, and insisting on uniformity and obedience to royal commands, controlled the Church's development. Under Charles Royal Supremacy became yet more effective, and in the Court of High Commission was brought home to the minds of the people more relentlessly than ever before. This Court had been endowed by letters patent with power to deal with ' all such errors, etc., spiritual and ecclesiastical, which by any spiritual or ecclesiastical power may be lawfully reformed ' ; and, though mainly composed of laymen, it inflicted ecclesiastical censures and excommunication, judged cases of heresy, and could suspend and degrade clergymen and even bishops.

It was the ruthless and arbitrary exercise of the royal prerogative through this court, combined with the utter powerlessness of the clergy, of convocation, or of Parliament to give effect to their desires for reform, that eventually brought matters to a climax, and provoked the Nonconformist schism. The Church did not disappear; neither did its constitution, thanks still to Royal Supremacy. But it ceased to be a National Church except in name, lost a large proportion of the most sincere amongst its members, and became during the century that followed more than ever a department of state, administered by state officials.

§ 48. With the advent of democracy the judicial and legislative functions of the Anglican Church were taken over by the civil courts, by Parliament, and by ministers of the Crown. But the Church was still bound hand and foot, and had no power to make her own laws, whether in matters of faith or ritual or order or discipline. Convocation, which was revived in 1850 after being silent for 134 years, was still merely an ecclesiastical debating society, whose resolutions were without practical effect. Authority to determine questions of rites and ceremonies and controversies

of faith, which ought to have rested with the Church, rested instead with the Privy Council. It was this court of lay judges that decided in 1850 that Gorham's doctrine of the non-necessity of Baptism as the channel of regenerating grace, was not contrary or repugnant to the declared doctrine of the Church of England; in 1857 that crucifixes and stone tables or altars are unlawful, that crosses are lawful as decorations only, and that embroidered linen and lace may not be used in the Communion Service; in 1858 that Denison's doctrine, which affirmed that 'to all who come to the Lord's Table, worthily or unworthily, the Body and Blood of Christ are given,' is directly contrary and repugnant to the doctrine of the Church of England; in 1872 that to contradict the condemnation of propitiatory masses by Article XXXI, or to maintain that Christ's offering on the Cross can be repeated in Holy Communion, is unlawful in the Church of England; in 1871 that the Ornaments rubric does not permit the use in Holy Communion of the chasuble, alb, and tunicle, and that the mixing of water with the wine is not permitted, etc., etc. True, a considerable section both of clergy and laity have persistently treated the decrees of this court with contempt and have openly and flagrantly violated them—as a rule with impunity. Yet this has only made matters worse, for they were—and for that matter as yet still are—the law of the land, and therefore the law of the Church that by law is established.

§ 49. That a Christian Church of a specific type should be governed for ever by men whose Christianity was not of that type and who in many cases were Christian in name only; that a parliament which was supposed to make laws for the Church, should not make them at all for want of time or good-will; and that the courts which did make such laws by way of interpreting old ones should have its judgments ignored by any one who did not approve them, was an anomaly such as no sincere Christian could well tolerate. Consequently within the Anglican communion a strong movement grew up, which urgently demanded for the Church, if not disestablishment, at least life and liberty, and in particular sought liberty from parliamentary control.

This movement was opposed both within and without the Establishment. 'The Church of England,' said Mr. Shakespeare, voicing Free Church opinion, 'is a National Church, and all Christians have certain rights in the national heritage.' If the Enabling Bill became law it would lose those rights, for 'it would be possible under the Bill for Church proposals to become law without any real parliamentary consideration or control.'

The argument was sound; but a nation professedly Christian

could hardly continue to claim rights which it persistently refused to exercise, thus thwarting the welfare of a national institution by the dead weight of sheer inaction. So toward the end of last year (1919) 'the National Assembly of the Church of England (Powers) Bill' became the law of the land, and by it the Church of England once again became a self-governing and comparatively free institution It is now a law unto itself, and its enactments have force, provided only they be approved by a parliamentary committee and be presented by both Houses of Parliament to His Majesty for the Royal Assent.

§ 50. Has the difficulty created by Royal Supremacy thus been removed? Have what the Free Churchman calls the 'Crown Rights of Jesus Christ' been surrendered by the civil usurper into the hands of the Church from which once they were stolen? Is the Anglican Church really free in the same full sense that other Christian Churches are free, or is it still fettered by State control?

Great as is the concession that has just been made, and great as its consequences must inevitably be for the Anglican communion, it would certainly be an exaggeration to say that the Anglican Church has thereby obtained complete freedom. Though the State is no longer to initiate legislation for the Church, or to have any voice in devising it, it still has the power to say 'yes' or 'no,' and the Church, by the very fact that it has asked for and accepted the Act which assigns such power to the State, acknowledges its legitimacy. It is not merely that the approval of a committee appointed by the Speaker and the Lord Chancellor, and the subsequent veto of Parliament, are necessary to give legal force to Church enactments, they are needed also to give them ecclesiastical force. If the King withhold his sanction on the recommendation of his Parliament and ministers, the canons that the National Assembly may draw up will have no more force than the canons of 1640. The Prayer Book and Articles were by law introduced at the bidding of the head of the nation, and they will remain as they are, or, by law, be modified or abolished according as a majority in the nation may choose. It may be questioned whether the majority of the nation, which is almost certainly not Anglican, yet realise their power in this matter; but they certainly possess it. Even as an autocratic government once changed the established religion of England, so now could a democratic government change it again, and in any direction they pleased. Parliament, if it choose, can suspend the Enabling Bill, or, even without this, can nullify its effect by refusing to ratify the decrees of the National Assembly. The Church of England is freer than it ever has been since the day when Henry became its supreme Lord, but it is not yet wholly free, as

the Free Church Federation is free, for it still acknowledges the State in the last resort as its lord and master. On the other hand, should a clash of wills ensue, there is always the alternative of disestablishment bought at the price of disendowment.

§ 51. Many hold that this price would be worth paying even now, and still more would support this view, should conflict arise between the Assembly of the Church and that of the people. Yet there is also another and a simpler solution—reunion. Conflict can only arise from a combination of forces hostile to the Church that is endowed and established. Win over the Nonconformists and this will become practically impossible. It is a principle with all Christians, save a section of the Anglican communion, that the Church of Christ must be free to interpret and administer His laws without restraint or control by external authority. Once Anglicans and Nonconformists became reunited, this principle would have won the day in England as elsewhere. The National Church would once again become the Church of the majority, if not of the whole, of the nation, and, this being so, the shackles that Henry forged in the nation's name, though they might nominally remain, would in practice cease to be any longer an encumbrance.

(vi) *Prospects and Advantages.*

§ 52. Though there does not seem to be any immediate prospect of reunion between Anglicans and Nonconformists, yet, when one considers them carefully, there does not seem to be any difficulty which could not with good will be overcome. The very fact that the Free Churches have not yet united among themselves is hopeful, for what they are looking for is a common polity that all will be able to accept, and that is precisely what Anglicanism has to offer. Nor is there any indication that Free Churchmen are more opposed to an episcopal form of polity than they are to the respective polities of their own Churches. What they fear is loss of liberty, and liberty is equally compatible with a constitutional episcopate, such as is now suggested, as it is with any other form of polity. The question of order is a serious matter, but if the Anglican Church could only be persuaded to treat those outside her fold with the same large-mindedness that she treats those within, this obstacle also from the point of view of faith should disappear. The chief difficulties from the Nonconformist standpoint are that reunion would mean reordination on the one hand, and, on the other, would put an end to independent Churches. Yet neither the one nor the other of these difficulties involves any sacrifice of principle.

Ordination need not be insisted upon as a condition for preaching and pastoral work, but merely for the administration of the sacraments, and even that not necessarily on the score of validity, but in order to satisfy the law and ease the consciences of those who hold a stricter view. So, too, will episcopacy be adopted merely as a polity, even as it was in days before the schism began, only now it will be adopted in a form which the precursors of Free Churchmanship, instead of repudiating, would gladly have welcomed. All will be called upon to make some sacrifice, but no one will be denying his past. On the contrary, the very details which the Puritans sought so strenuously to realise, but which autocracy thwarted at every turn, will in very truth be realised by reunion on the basis of a constitutional episcopacy, a modified Prayer Book and the fundamental faith of Nicæa.

§ 53. Home reunion will also undoubtedly be followed immediately by that wider reunion which will bring into being a United Protestant Church for the English-speaking world. And this will mean to all intents and purposes an end of sectarianism as at present exists. In the Reunited Church Unitarians will not be included. Nor, doubtless, will the Society of Friends. There will also be in all probability individual congregations who will refuse to sacrifice their liberties, small communities who will think that faith is being compromised, ministers here and there who will refuse to be reordained. A certain number of petty schisms may thus be generated, which later on may combine to give yet another Free Church. A considerable variety of petty churches, of much eccentricity and but little account, will also remain outside. This cannot be helped so long as man has an erratic intelligence and a Bible to exercise it upon. Neither will it matter very much; for the significance and power of dissent will be feeble in comparison with that of the many millions who will profess the faith, acknowledge the obedience, and join in the worship of the United English-speaking Church. In English-speaking countries, at any rate, there will be but one Protestant Church of any moment, and that, though differing somewhat in form in different countries, will for the first time in the history of Protestantism constitute but one communion, united in worship and professing, nominally at least, the same faith. The stain on the history of Protestantism will remain, but the chief bar to its progress will be removed. If it has failed in the past, it will at least be able now to say, we have recognised at last what Christ meant by unity, and to the best of our ability have sought to realise it.

§ 54. The effect that an evangelical reunion will have upon the semi-pagan multitude will also be for good. It will not only

release for warfare against a common enemy numerous forces at present otherwise engaged, but for the first time since the Reformation indifference will be met by unity of effort and scepticism by unity of fundamental faith. Ministers of the Reunited Church will not be able to preach with quite the same authority as did Christ's apostles, for their authority will rest mainly on the ground of common consent; yet even this should help, for it is upon this basis that rest most of our natural beliefs. The scandal of contradiction, though not entirely gone, will at least be less obtrusive, and though it will always be possible to believe more than will be believed in the United English-speaking Church, it will at any rate be something that there will only be two Christianities instead of a whole host of them to choose from. The effect of an Evangelical reunion will unquestionably be great both at home and in the mission field. There will be unity of action everywhere, and therefore an increase of power that will make itself felt in social matters as well as in religious, and will have influence with Governments seeking reconstruction no less than with the masses that so urgently demand it.

§ 55. On the other hand, a reunited Church of the English-speaking world will not realise Christ's ideal. It will not be international or Catholic or world-wide. It will not give to Christianity that unity and power which is hoped for in political questions from a League of Nations or in social questions from a world congress of labour. It will be merely an English-speaking Church appealing exclusively to English-speaking people. The rest of the world—France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain, Belgium, Scandinavia, Russia, the Balkans, Asia, South America—will be left outside. It will not include at first even the Protestants of foreign countries. It will exist only in English-speaking countries, and even there will not be the only English-speaking Church, for side by side with it both in the British Empire and America there will still be millions of Catholics. It will get rid of Protestant diversity in these countries, but it will not get rid of diversity entirely. Neither will its existence make diversity more explicable, or render the Protestant claim to be considered a branch of the Catholic Church more easy to substantiate. Quite the contrary, for it will itself be full of anomalies. It will preach fundamental faith, but will stop short at the Nicene Creed, and will be unable to explain why it should stop short there rather than anywhere else, except by pointing out that the faith of the Nicene Creed happens to be the highest common factor of the beliefs that the conflict of sects and the wear and tear of ages has left to Protestant Churches. It will preach this faith with a certain amount of

authority, but to the thinking man that authority will be neither more nor less than that of a number of individuals who, for the moment, chance to find themselves agreed. Protestant Churches, by becoming reunited, will not become a whit more apostolic. Those little Churches that remain outside will still be able to say: If we have made our Christianity by selection, so by selection have you made yours; and the Modernist: Why blame us for crying halt at one point in Christianity's evolution, if you yourselves cry halt at another three centuries later. Christianity cannot turn back; neither can it stand still. It must either develop or die.

§ 56. As with Christianity, so with reunion: it must ever go forward. Either redintegration must continue, or disintegration will again set in. Reunion on an Evangelical basis will be but a partial remedy for evils that have befallen Christendom. It will be neither complete nor Catholic till the older schism also is healed. Nor yet will it bring with it apostolicity, nor restore authority till Evangelicalism and Catholicism again become one. It may be a great step, possibly even a necessary step, toward the realisation of Christ's ideal; and for the moment it is the only corporate step possible. But it must not remain so. A hundred years ago reunion, even on an Evangelical basis, would have been impossible. It is not so now. Neither will reunion on a Catholic basis remain impossible, if the Churches that lie outside would only grow in faith half as rapidly as they are growing in fellowship and mutual understanding. The reunion of Anglicans, Presbyterians and Nonconformists may from one point of view appear as a set-back to the Catholic cause, in that it will be a reunion amongst non-Catholics on a basis of compromise and even of dogmatic indifferentism, but it will mean the adoption of episcopacy, of a Liturgy, and outwardly at least of many Catholic forms. It will also mean that the ideal of Christian unity has been brought appreciably nearer to the hearts of all concerned. No matter how difficult the task or how remote the prospect, it must never be allowed to recede.

ESSAY IV

THE AMBIGUITY OF ANGLICANISM

'The voice indeed is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau; and he knew him not because his hairy hands made him like to the elder.'—GENESIS xxvii. 22–23.

1. *The Question at Issue.*

§ 1. THE basis of reunion between Anglicans and Nonconformists, as suggested by the Lambeth Quadrilateral and by the Conferences on Faith and Order, is definitely Protestant in character. The Reunited Church is to take as its rule of faith not the living voice of the Spirit-guided Church, nor even Scripture as interpreted by primitive tradition, but just simply Scripture itself. Its faith-basis is to be that of a Creed which makes no mention of the Mass, the Real Presence, Our Lady, the Saints, but just simply of those questions which happened to be in dispute in the fourth century. Its sacraments will not be the traditional seven in use throughout the Catholic world, but just those two which are commonly accepted by all Protestants, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the latter will be both celebrated and interpreted in the Protestant way. The government of the Reunited Church will be episcopal, but it will not teach that episcopacy is of divine institution, that through it in a special way the guidance of the Holy Ghost is made manifest, or that upon it the validity of orders and sacraments depends. If then the Anglican Church is to reunite on this basis with Presbyterians and Nonconformists, it will acknowledge itself to be what the majority of Christians have always taken it to be, a Church that is not only reformed but Protestant.

§ 2. There are many Anglicans, however, who do not so regard their Church. There has always been a party within that Church which has maintained that it is a branch of the Church Catholic. There has also been at least a small party which has clung to certain Catholic beliefs, notably belief in the Apostolic Succession and in the Real Presence. That party has now become a large and a

strong one, and, in addition to the Apostolic Succession and the Real Presence, many of its members now believe in almost all distinctively Catholic doctrines. They also hold that their Church has never explicitly denied these doctrines. So far from admitting that it has fallen into heresy, they even deny that it has fallen into schism. Its official faith, as expressed in the Prayer Book and Articles may be a little ambiguous, but, rightly interpreted, they say, it is compatible with, nay, inculcates Catholic doctrine. Those Anglicans, therefore, who would seek reunion with Protestant Churches, and especially those representatives of Anglicanism who suggest that all distinctively Catholic doctrine should be dropped, are in the view of High Anglicans betraying their trust, and being disloyal, if not to the letter of the Articles, at any rate to Anglican tradition and spirit. The reunion which the Anglican Church by right should seek is reunion with the Catholic Churches of the Continent or with the Orthodox Churches of the East.

So convinced are many Anglicans of the justice of their claim to Catholicity that not a few chaplains in France have presented themselves to French curés *as* Catholics with a request for permission to say Mass. Sometimes curés have been taken in in this way, but, learning wisdom with experience, they usually ask now of an English chaplain if he also be Roman. A reply in the negative inevitably evokes a polite refusal to grant the request, accompanied not infrequently by a note of interrogation as to what a Catholic who is not Roman may be. For, to a Catholic who is Roman, a 'Catholic' who is not, is a mystery. If Catholic mean world-wide, an individual can be Catholic only if he be a member of a Church that is world-wide; and of such Churches there is only one. Similarly if a Church be Catholic, it can only be because it is world-wide itself, or because it is part of this Church that is world-wide. And where there is question of a society, as there is in this case, the test of what is, or is not a part of it, is the social bond of fellowship or communion by which a society is constituted.

§ 3. Previous to the Reformation this simple and practical test was recognised universally, and is still recognised by the older Churches, for, since the schism, the Orthodox Church repudiates the Catholicity of the Roman Church on the ground of schism no less vigorously than does the latter on the same ground repudiate the Catholicity of the non-uniate East. Anglicans have discarded this test. And for a very obvious reason. If they accepted it, it would exclude them from the Church to which they claim to belong. In an interesting little book entitled 'The Unity of the Church as treated by English Theologians' the Rev. T. A. Lacey shows how there has gradually grown up in the post-Reformation

English Church a distinction between the essential or objective and the moral or subjective unity of the Church. The 'unity of the Church, essential, natural, organic, social, is the work of God alone, fixed and immovable as the laws of nature.' Being organic, it 'depends upon a certain principle of life, which is the possession of the true faith and sacramental grace.' Being also social, it 'depends upon the continuance of a certain order' or hierarchy.[1] In this organic and natural unity the English Church still shares. In the 'moral unity' of the Church, which 'corresponds to the natural unity' and consists in 'free and brotherly participation in the sacraments,' the 'brotherly intercourse of Church with Church' etc., it does not share; but this is not necessary, Mr. Lacey argues, for moral unity is not an indefectible attribute of the Church but an end, and is the work of man, not the work of God.

This distinction appears to be somewhat arbitrary. It also ignores the very patent fact that similarity of structure (or hierarchy) does not constitute *one* society, any more than does similarity of structure in Insurance Companies constitute them one society: similarity of structure indicates merely that societies are similar one to another. But the question with which we are at present concerned is not whether this argument be valid, granted the data upon which it is based, but whether these data exist. If the faith and worship of the Anglican Church be orthodox and its orders and sacraments valid, then, though it is not in fact in Catholic communion, it certainly ought to be, and that is practically what its claim to Catholicity amounts to. It is a claim to be admitted to Catholic communion, based on the supposition that in faith and worship and order the English Church, though reformed, has never ceased to be one with the Church Catholic.

§ 4. Now, as we have already indicated in a previous Essay, the faith of any particular Church can best be judged by its own official declarations, for it is for this purpose that such declarations are drawn up, and by them that all members of a Church are bound in conscience. Similarly the worship and order of a Church can best be known through the liturgies and ordinals in which it is expressed. In the case of the Anglican Church, then, it is the Prayer Book and Articles that are mainly in question. If their true meaning, the meaning which those that framed them intended them to bear or which the Church itself has officially put upon them, be Catholic, then certainly those who so interpret them are justified in resisting reunion on Protestant lines to the utmost of their power. But if their true meaning be Protestant, then, surely, if any body is to be excluded from the Anglican communion, it should not be

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 153, 154.

the would-be Anglicans that are without, but the would-be Catholics that are within. The third possibility, which is that the Prayer Book and Articles are not merely ambiguous in form, but are intended to be ambiguous, though less drastic in its consequences for the 'Catholic' party amongst Anglicans, would by no means justify them in opposing a Protestant reunion, but, on the contrary, should justify them in welcoming it in the broad-minded Anglican way. On the other hand, to avail oneself of ambiguity in assenting to declarations of faith can never be very satisfactory, still less can it be satisfactory to make use of ambiguity in order to bring about reunion. Either the Protestantism or the Catholicism of the Prayer Book and Articles should be, and probably is, mere appearance. The religion they express may be a *via media*, i.e., a mixture of the two; but it can hardly be *in the full sense both* Catholic and Protestant, as some would seem to maintain. If, then, we can discover *which* is mere appearance, the problem of reunion for Anglicans is solved, and that in a far more satisfactory way than if, relying upon the ambiguity of the Articles and Prayer Book, reunion were to be based on the fact that neither a Protestant nor a Catholic interpretation is wholly excluded. History may or may not be able to answer this question for us, but at least we can examine it and try.

2. *The Cromwell-Cranmer Policy.*

§ 5. When Henry VIII, at the instigation of Cromwell and later on of Cranmer, began to make changes in the constitution and practice and professon of faith of the English Church, the religion of that Church was Catholic through and through. There was no ambiguity about it whatsoever. In its faith, its worship, its sacraments, its orders, even in its attitude toward Papal Supremacy, the English Church was wholly at one with the rest of the Church Catholic. Henry had recently written a book against Luther. He did so because his own faith and the faith of all England was shocked by the attacks that Luther had made upon it. There was nobody in England to write it against: no Protestants, no Reformers, not even at this time any Lollards. The most that can be said is that there was a certain amount of friction between the clergy and the laity. The laity, so St. Germain tells us, complained that the clergy had too many exemptions and did not pay enough dues; that tithes were a burden, and that marriages, funerals, and probates were too costly; that pluralities benefited the person who held them but not the public; that too many benefices were allotted to monasteries and

colleges; that the right of sanctuary was abused, and that there were too many holidays; that youngsters entered monasteries at too early an age; that the people were ill-instructed in regard to pilgrimages and monasteries. That is practically all that St. Germain has to complain of in the English Church and clergy; yet he was writing as a partisan and with the definite object of stirring up in the King's interest an anti-clerical feeling in the country. The whole question was one not of faith, but of finance. It is certain, therefore, not only that England was Catholic in the days of Henry VIII, but that it was wholly and contentedly Catholic. Whatever changes were made, were not made by the people or to please the people, but by the Crown and in the interests of the Crown. The people as a whole were opposed to them from first to last, and at first were opposed to them almost to a man.

§ 6. Now a king who wishes to act in direct contravention of the wishes of his people, especially in matters of religion, must go cautiously, using considerable diplomacy and tact. This Henry did. He began by attacking not the religion of the people but the power of their clergy, which had for centuries been the main bulwark of liberty, Christian and civil. Partly by threats and partly by a discreet use of ambiguity the clergy were persuaded to acknowledge the King as the Supreme Head of their Church. They understood the phrase to mean Supreme Head in temporals, and Henry deliberately led them to suppose that this was what *he* meant, too. They also saw through a ruse which would have made the King's spiritual jurisdiction more manifest, and changed the phrase 'the cure of souls committed unto His Majesty' into 'the cure of souls *in the nation* committed to His Majesty.' But to Royal Supremacy they reluctantly gave their assent, first conditionally and then unconditionally, when Parliament, in which the King had judiciously fanned the flame of anti-clericalism, had made it the law of the land.

There was also a little ambiguity in the second act of the drama. When Henry asked the clergy to surrender into his hands their legislative powers or take the consequences of a technical infringement of the statute of *Praemunire*, they were caught in a trap, and did as he desired. But in so doing, they never dreamt that the King would refuse them permission to legislate, or that this inalienable Christian right would eventually be handed over to Parliament. What they did they did blindfold, with a bandage of trust and fear, never realising either its significance or its consequences.

The third act of the drama also contained a little ambiguity.

The renunciation of papal jurisdiction might mean only temporal jurisdiction—the deposing power, the right to veto civil legislation and other powers that were supposed to be based on the spurious Donation of Constantine. It might be the counterpart of that supreme temporal jurisdiction which the King had already assumed, especially as appeals to the Pope for a time went on just as usual. In any case the clergy, yielding to the persuasions of their Archbishop, again acceded to the wishes of their all-powerful King. We must also remember that at this time both King and Archbishop were supposed to be loyal Catholics, and hence to be acting presumably in Catholic as well as in national interests.

§ 7. Henry's tactful use of a little ambiguity was distinctly a success. He got what he wanted, and as soon as he had got it the ambiguity disappeared. Except for the power of ordaining priests, or administering sacraments, he and his successors, future British Queens and Kings and Parliaments, both claimed and exercised over the English Church every possible kind of jurisdiction. Not only was she never again to make laws without the consent of her monarch, but she was never again to make laws at all. They were to be made for her by Kings and Councils and Parliament and Privy Council, and by them to be interpreted. Papal Supremacy also had gone wholly and entirely, and with it liberty. Royal Supremacy, the Submission of the Clergy and the renunciation of Papal Jurisdiction were ambiguous only in the process by which they came to be. Once they existed, their meaning in fact became abundantly clear.

Moreover, though Henry did not say so and Luther disclaimed the term itself, Royal Supremacy really was a Lutheran polity. It obtained in the form of princely supremacy in all the Lutheran provinces of Germany and was being introduced, together with Lutheranism, into Denmark and Norway at the very moment when Henry was introducing it into England. It had been introduced into Sweden in 1527, with the destruction of monasteries, appropriation of Church property, and the gradual adoption of Lutheranism as its corollary. In each case there was a State Church, governed by bishops or superintendents who were little more than State officials, and held office direct from the Crown. The English Church having adopted the principle, it became a matter of considerable interest to foreign Protestants whether the King would be content with the principle only or would proceed to act upon it. The dictum, *Cujus regio, ejus religio*, which was already being applied on the Continent, would doubtless hold good; but what was the religion that the King would adopt?

§ 8. The denial of Papal Supremacy also encouraged the

Protestants. Protestantism, as conceived by the Reformers, consisted essentially in the denial of 'superfluous' Catholic doctrine; and the first doctrine to go in the logical, if not in the time, order was Papal Supremacy. England had till recently held this doctrine no less firmly than the rest of the Catholic world. In 1417 at the Council of Constance the English clergy declared that England had never swerved from her obedience to the Roman Church, had never tried to rend the seamless coat of the Lord, had never endeavoured to shake off her loyalty to the Roman pontiffs. A little later the University of Oxford had written to the Pope professing without doubt in their hearts that he was the true head of the Church, the Supreme Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ on earth, the successor of St. Peter. A few years before Papal Supremacy was discarded, the English Ambassador, in presenting Henry's book, had professed on behalf of his King and country veneration not only for the Pope's person, but also for his office as the rock established by God. Now Papal Supremacy had gone, and, while Protestants rejoiced, the nation at large was vastly uneasy about it. It was in vain that the King sent preachers everywhere to explain why this doctrine had been abolished, in vain that they said it was an abuse founded on a myth, or that the Pope was the Harlot of Babylon. They could not deny that the English Church had once believed in Papal Supremacy, for had they not been sent for the express purpose of eradicating this belief, and were they not now teaching the people to hate a person whom a few years before all the world had been encouraged to respect and support? The most they could do was to seek to justify the new doctrine which the English Church was now teaching, on the ground that her Royal Head, in a moment of inspiration, had discovered the old one to be damnable. But if one doctrine had gone, why not others?

§ 9. In Reformation days the denial of Papal Supremacy was but the prelude to reconstruction of faith on Biblical lines, and the destruction of monasteries, images, and shrines was the incidental music which usually accompanied it. In England the prelude was hardly completed when the incidental music began to resound loudly through the land, and from that day onwards the appearance of the Church of England became steadily more and more Protestant. It will be interesting to watch this transformation, for the steadiness of it indicates that a definite policy was at work, and curiously enough it began with the appointment of Cromwell as the King's chief minister and of Cranmer as England's chief bishop.

When Warham died Cranmer was hastily recalled from a mission to the Protestant princes of Germany in order that he might succeed

him as Archbishop of Canterbury. He returned, imbued with Lutheran principles, and with the niece of Osiander, a prominent Lutheran, as his second wife. He took the usual oath of obedience to the Pope, having first declared in private that he would treat it as null and void, and would hold his see as from the King only. Thereby he not only perjured himself, but introduced another Lutheran principle, afterwards to be made obligatory by Act of Parliament. It was immediately after Cranmer became Archbishop that Papal Supremacy was abolished and Royal Supremacy made absolute: two very definite steps in the direction of Lutheranism, and of paramount importance for the future. There followed the suppression of the monasteries, the abolition of pilgrimages, and the looting of shrines. All this was done, ostensibly on account of abuses, really for selfish reasons, but it none the less both suggested and promoted Protestantism, in that this official action implied and encouraged disrespect for Catholic institutions and practices, aroused a spirit of Vandalism, and brought into existence a Court party which, enriched by the spoils of the Church, was eager to propagate Protestantism, lest the Church should reassert itself and insist upon restitution. The King's ecclesiastical appointments were also destined to bear fruit in days to come. Those who were appointed as visitors, or sent to explain to the people that England was not yet in schism in spite of the changes the King was making, and those who were appointed to vacant benefices and sees, were chosen because they were enthusiasts for Royal Supremacy; but they were also enthusiasts for Protestant reform. It was Cranmer and Cromwell who selected them. A number of Protestants also came over from Germany, and were encouraged to translate and publish Protestant pamphlets, which were sold for a few pence in the market-places. A Protestant leaven was thus introduced, and a Protestant movement begun. Disturbances multiplied. An excuse for Royal intervention in matters of faith was thus provided.

§ 10. This intervention took the form of 'Ten Articles, devised by the King's Majesty to establish Christian quietness and unity amongst us'—a significant phrase, oft to be repeated in the next reign as an excuse for further innovations. The new Articles made no mention of four out of seven sacraments, while Cranmer in his speech to Convocation (at which Cromwell presided and a foreign reformer was present) definitely stated that in his view all the sacraments, except the Lord's Supper and Baptism, were open to question. In 1538 Cromwell issued injunctions, ordering the removal of all images which had been abused by the setting up of candles and offerings before them. He ordered besides, as the King's

Vice-Regent, the setting up of an English Bible in every Church, which the clergy were to admonish their parishioners to read. This throwing open of the Bible, just at the moment when controversy was raging as to whether this or that doctrine had Biblical sanction, also greatly encouraged the Protestants. 'Behold the Bible which the Church has placed in your hands,' they could now say; 'read it and you will see that there is nothing in it about Transubstantiation or the Mass or Communion in one kind or confession to a priest; that Christ only mentioned two sacraments; that most of the apostles were married men; and that there is not a word about the ceremonies which you see daily performed in your churches.' The result was not always edifying, for, as the King remarked, the Word of God became 'disputed, rhymed, sung, and jangled in every alehouse,' but such arguments were bound to go home, and Protestantism to be benefited thereby.

§ 11. There was a reaction in the last eight years of Henry's reign, prompted chiefly by the fear that the Emperor and the King of France might unite with Henry's discontented subjects to enforce the papal bull of excommunication. In 1539 the Statute of Six Articles condemned the very doctrines that Cranmer had been secretly advocating, and in the next year Cromwell was executed. The burning of Protestants, preferably side by side with Papists, and the 'King's Book,' sound in most of its doctrine, but cautiously suggesting that Scripture is the rule of faith, repudiating some of Rome's laws and ordinances on the ground that they are discrepant with it, and definitely teaching that unity of opinion and rite is not necessary, was Henry's way of assuring the Catholic world of his orthodoxy. Under such circumstances Cranmer could do but little. A book of 'Ceremonies to be used in the Church of England, together with an Explanation of the Meaning and Significancy of Them' was drawn up, but was not approved by Convocation. A committee was appointed to revise Canon Law, but it came to nought; and Cranmer's draft scheme was never even submitted.

Yet Cranmer persevered, and his efforts were not entirely unavailing. The Great Bible, condemned by Convocation as a bad translation, remained in use. The severity of the Six Articles was modified. An English Litany was prescribed for processions, in which men prayed to be delivered from 'the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities.' With it was published a manual of English prayers for private use. Three times was Cranmer accused of heresy, but without result, since the King was still his friend. A proposal to substitute a Communion Service for the Mass was discussed. Almost Cranmer suc-

ceeded in obtaining the King's assent to the abolition of a number of Catholic ceremonies. While an Act for the abolition of chantries and free chapels, at once witnesses to belief in purgatory and private masses and strongholds of Catholic life and devotion, had already been passed, when Henry died.

§ 12. So long as the King lived it was he, not his archbishop, who was Pope, yet Cranmer in reality had won the day. The schism with Rome had cut off the English Church from the centre of Catholic orthodoxy and robbed it of all the benefits that accrue from membership in a world-wide communion. Already it was unorthodox in its attitude toward the Pope, in its doctrine of Royal Supremacy, and in its theory of the rights of National Churches to form their own 'opinions' and alter rites and ceremonies. Already, too, it had in many respects a distinctively Protestant appearance. Vandalism had invaded its churches; its monasteries lay in ruins; its pulpits were silent, or preached only as the King directed; its bishops were divided in counsel; and already within the Church was a strong and active party, which under the able leadership of their archbishop sought to reform on Protestant lines. Throughout the reign it is possible to trace the operation of a definite Protestant policy.

Yet it was not an open policy. The changes that were made were all made on grounds of expediency, never on Protestant principles. Nor was it the King's policy. As he deliberately encouraged an anti-clerical propaganda, so also he encouraged at times a Protestant propaganda, but he did so merely to serve his own purposes, not because he believed in Protestantism. It was not Henry who thought of Royal Supremacy or of suppressing the monasteries, but Cromwell, as it was Cromwell and Cranmer who were the prime movers in the changes that followed. The King's *motu proprio* acts are his book against Luther and the Six Articles. The Protestantising also is his, but it is suggested by somebody else, and the foolish old Defender of the Faith, besotted with women and blinded by greed and conceit, while fondly imagining that he was doing everything himself, in reality was led by the nose whither he would not. So long as the King was alive Cranmer durst not promote Protestantism openly, so he was content to introduce it in the guise of something else, first creating a situation, and then suggesting the abolition of Catholic practice or the introduction of a Protestant one by way of a remedy. Nor did Cranmer fail to realise where the chief difficulty lay or to provide against it. The submission of the clergy and the Acts of Appeals and of Royal Supremacy had placed the Church absolutely at the King's mercy; but thus far the King had used his Supremacy

sometimes in behalf of, and sometimes in opposition to Protestant interests. This difficulty could only be partially obviated for the moment, but Cranmer did not intend that it should recur. In spite of Henry's apparent love for the old religion, his son and heir was brought up under Protestant influences and with Protestant ideals.

3. *Cranmer's Plan of Campaign.*

§ 13. When Henry died in 1547 and was succeeded by the boy prince, Edward, that Royal Supremacy which Cromwell and Cranmer had brought into being passed into the hands of Cranmer and Somerset. They were bosom friends, as Cromwell and Cranmer had been, and both were eager to promote the cause of Protestantism: Cranmer for its own sake, Somerset—a creature whom Henry's iconoclasm had made—for the sake of what could be gained from it. The King was not likely to oppose them, and could not, if he would; while by a brilliant *coup d'état* all Catholic influences were excluded. The moment had come for which Cranmer had striven so long and plotted so zealously, even at the risk of his life. The English Church, bound hand and foot by the Act of Royal Supremacy, lay at his disposal. Its faith and worship were in his keeping to do with as he would; the ultimate success of the Protestant cause was practically assured.

§ 14. It was clear what Cranmer had to do if he wished to make the English Church wholly Protestant: he must carry into effect that programme of reform which the Six Articles had condemned. He had long since given up belief in religious vows and in the celibacy of the clergy. He had also called in question the sacramental character of auricular confession and ordination; and if in regard to the remaining points, communion in one kind, Transubstantiation, and the Mass, his utterances during the reign of Henry had of necessity been more guarded, he had at any rate encouraged those who denied these doctrines so far as he dared, and even while Henry lived, was in sympathy with, even if he had not actually adopted their opinions. His opinion on Transubstantiation is clear from a letter which he wrote to Gardiner in 1551 in which he says in reference to a translation of Luther's Catechism which he had published in 1548: 'Not long before I wrote this Catechism, I was in that error of the Real Presence which I was *many years previously* in divers errors of Transubstantiation, etc.' Not only had belief in Transubstantiation disappeared, then, in 1548, but also, though more recently, belief in the Real Presence. Belief in the Mass as a propitiatory sacrifice had also gone, as is

apparent from Cranmer's reply to the questions which he addressed to his bishops at about this date.[1] He did not believe that the Mass was anything more than the memory and representation of the Sacrifice of the Cross, nor did he believe that its virtue extended beyond communion. For the moment he was not in favour of abolishing it altogether, but would keep it as a sacrifice of praise and prayer which we offer to God for the living and the dead. In all probability, however, Cranmer did not believe in it even in this modified sense, for immediately his First Prayer Book had appeared, he announced his intention of 'taking the Mass as a sacrifice clean away out of Christian Churches as manifest wickedness and idolatry,' and even in the First Prayer Book he does not call it a sacrifice but merely an 'offering.' In any case on the main point his views were genuinely Protestant. The Mass may or may not have been for him a sacrifice of *praise* which *we* offer to God for the living and the dead, but it was certainly not the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ which *He* offers to God for the living and the dead: apart from its value as a sacrament, it had merely the value of prayer.

Such were Cranmer's views, and such the programme of 'reform' which he proposed to execute with all possible speed. Obviously the most serious and the most vital questions were those of Transubstantiation and the Mass, for round this the religious life of Catholic England was centred. Accordingly, to the problem of how to get rid of these two most hideous of Popish errors Cranmer devoted the main part of his time and energy during the first two years of the new reign.

§ 15. Meanwhile he kept the Council busy carrying out those reforms which he had already suggested in the previous reign, but which Convocation and the King had turned down. Having first made sure of the bishops by compelling them to take out new commissions in which they acknowledged that their jurisdiction was held in virtue of their appointment by the Crown, he proceeded to get rid of a number of Catholic ceremonies and practices, such as processions, midnight matins, prime and the little hours, the images that Henry's vandalism had not destroyed, creeping to the cross, and the use of ashes, palms, holy water, and holy bread. Next he established communion in both kinds, abolished entirely the chantries and guilds, and published a new Order for Communion, which was to supplement the Mass, and which incidentally provided a form of general confession for such as did not desire to be shriven before going to communion, and by ordering that

[1] *The Miscellaneous Writings of Th. Cranmer* (Parker Soc.), pp. 150, 151.

notice of communion should be given on the previous day, in part did away with the need of reservation.

All this was strictly in accord with the policy inaugurated in the time of Cromwell, and was carried out by precisely the same means. The smaller changes were made by Orders in Council, those of greater moment by Act of Parliament, and the ground alleged was never a change of principle, but just simply the prevalence of abuses or of disturbances endangering the peace of the realm. Thus images were not destroyed because the use of them was contrary to the first Commandment; they were removed first of all where royal visitors deemed that superstitious practices resulted, and then those remaining were removed on the ground that disturbances had arisen in connection with the carrying out of the previous order. For the abolition of celibacy, the introduction of Communion in both kinds, and the new Order of Communion, the reason alleged was that these changes were necessary in the interests of tranquillity and public order. Ostensibly the English Church, in the person of its Supreme Head, was merely exercising its rights as a National Church, and in the Bill for Communion it was expressly pointed out that the usage of other countries was not thereby condemned. All the same the practices that were abolished were not merely condemned by implication, but were openly denounced from the pulpit with the Government's connivance and approval. Of faith nothing officially was said, but, as Latimer had pointed out in regard to the monasteries, and Crome in regard to the chantries, the abolition of Catholic practices could be justified only on the supposition that the practices themselves were wrong and the doctrines they implied erroneous. Faith and practice go hand in hand, and if once the practice of the Church was changed, its faith, as Cranmer well knew, would speedily follow suit.

That was the basic principle upon which Cranmer was working, and had been working all along. He would convert England to Protestantism by means of a *Lex Orandi* which should exclude the expression and practice of Catholic faith, and so eventually kill it. But before he could abolish the Mass and the worship of the Blessed Sacrament he must create an excuse for so doing, as Cromwell had created one before him with a view to his attack on the clergy and the monasteries.

§ 16. The Protestant propaganda which had characterised the early days of his archbishopric, but had ceased during the period of reaction, was therefore vigorously resumed. Homilies suggesting in a cautious way the changes that were about to be made and explaining the need for them were ordered to be read in all the

churches. Preachers, licensed by Cranmer, were strictly enjoined to inculcate obedience to the law of the realm, but were allowed to attack Catholic doctrines more or less as they pleased, while those who defended them were silenced. Latimer openly taught that the Mass was the work of the devil, and was permitted to go on doing so. Hancock, holding the host above his head at Mass, declared that to worship it was idolatry. There was almost a riot in consequence, but Hancock was saved from punishment by the intervention of Somerset. Pamphlets attacking the Mass and Transubstantiation flooded the country. For prudence sake a few reformers, such as Coverdale, were mildly reproved for 'endangering the cause by a rash running before,' but that was all: the propaganda was otherwise encouraged. Result: public insults to the Blessed Sacrament are of common occurrence, and disturbances frequently ensue; (2) in the interests of peace and tranquillity a reform of the Liturgy has become 'necessary.'

§ 17. Whilst the malady was thus steadily propagating itself, Cranmer was busy devising a remedy. We know in what that remedy consisted. It took the form of a Prayer Book. But why a Prayer Book? Surely that again was but part of the Cromwell-Cranmer policy, the policy of introducing changes on the ground of expediency and in the form of a *Lex Orandi* which, without professing to be Protestant, should none the less be Protestant in that it should do away with what was Catholic, and so should change the faith of England by changing first of all her practice. Had Cranmer boldly announced his intention of abolishing the Mass and the Blessed Sacrament there would have been an outcry. But what more natural than that he should sum up the reforms that had already been made, adding to them a few new ones, including that of the Breviary, and should publish the whole in a single volume of Anglican rites. And what more natural than that amongst these rites he should include also orders for the administration of the sacraments of which one would be an Order for administering Holy Communion? Incidentally the Mass would disappear, for the new Prayer Book would be imposed, and all other rites forbidden. But it would be a far less offensive way of getting rid of the Mass than more direct and drastic methods which might easily provoke to revolt a nation so Catholic that it had risen in rebellion even against the less apparent Protestantism of Henry. It would also be equally effective. No article of Catholic faith would be denied: nothing, indeed, would be said of faith one way or the other; yet granted that the new Order for administering Holy Communion was presented as merely an Order for administering Holy Communion, and that in it there was no

suggestion of Christ's Body being offered by way of sacrifice, nor indeed of its being present at all, except in the act of communion, belief in the Mass as a sacrifice would eventually vanish. Similarly, granted that the Blessed Sacrament disappeared from the churches, that there were no processions, no elevation, no outward sign whatsoever of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist, belief in the Real Presence, and *a fortiori* belief in Transubstantiation, would likewise be consigned to oblivion.

§ 18. Such was the ingenious scheme which the fertile brain of Cranmer devised for the conversion of England from a faith which it loved to the faith which its Archbishop, and a few of his friends, had come to believe was the true one. And in the development of it he spared himself no pains. Samples of each kind of Protestantism were obtained from abroad, Bucer, Peter Martyr, A Lasco, and he was in constant correspondence with leading foreign reformers. Numerous experiments were made with the Mass in the King's Chapel and at Oxford, and to test the attitude of the populace the new Order of Communion was introduced ' until further orders should be provided.' At Chertsey and Windsor secret conclaves of Cranmer's friends were called together, and every passage of the new book studied with the utmost care. Cranmer himself supervised the whole of it, and not even his advisers from abroad were allowed to know what precisely he was about.

4. *The Ambiguity of the First Prayer Book.*

§ 19. The next problem which Cranmer had to solve was the same as that which Cromwell had to solve when he proposed to substitute Royal for Papal Supremacy, and he solved it in the same way. Before the Prayer Book could become law he must get it approved and accepted, at least by the bishops, otherwise Parliament would never sanction it, for Parliament, though servile, was still largely Catholic. Therefore Cranmer, like Cromwell, had recourse to ambiguity. He would make the Prayer Book Protestant, and by means of it would abolish the two last and most vital of Catholic practices, the Mass and the Worship of the Sacrament, but he would so disguise this Protestantism in Catholic garments that the real intention and purpose of the Prayer Book should at least for the moment be concealed. He would thus be able to present it to the Catholic bishops as a necessary, though somewhat drastic, remedy for abuses and disorders, which, though largely of his own creation, were none the less real.

The Prayer Book which the Catholic bishops were asked to approve did not consist merely, or even mainly, of a Communion

Service and of rites for the administration of the Sacraments. It comprised also the ancient Breviary, condensed for public use into a simple form of Morning and Evening Prayer, and therefore quite innocuous; a Litany, also innocuous except for one or two passages, and already approved and in use; and a complete collection of Introits, Collects, Epistles, Gospels, Psalms and Lessons for use on Sundays and Feast-days. To none of this would the Catholic bishops be likely to take exception, unless on the ground that it was in English, for they had already accepted the principle that a National Church may reform its own Liturgy, and thus far the reform was substantially orthodox.

§ 20. The Prayer Book was also introduced by a most ingenious Preface, which, quoting largely from that of Cardinal Quignon, suggested that the aim of the reformers was merely to redress abuses and so to produce 'an Order for prayer and for the reading of Scripture much agreeable to the mind and purpose of the old Fathers and a great deal more profitable and commodious than that which of late was used.'

A still more ingenious Appendix treated 'of Ceremonies, why some be abolished and some retained.' In the art of ambiguity this little essay is a masterpiece. It says nothing whatsoever of faith, or of worship as an expression of faith, but purports to be concerned merely with such ceremonies as have been introduced into the Church by 'the institution of man.' Whence it infers that 'the keeping or omitting of a ceremony, in itself considered, is but a small thing.' This being laid down as a general principle, it proceeds to point out that, it being impossible in this matter to please both those who wish to abolish all ceremonies and those who wish to keep them all, the aim of the reformers had been to please God and profit both. Only those ceremonies have been abolished which have been abused by 'superstitious blindness and insatiable avarice,' and that only because 'the abuses could not well be taken away, the thing remaining still.' Due reverence for antiquity is expressed, as in the Preface; and while claiming for each country the right to 'use such ceremonies as they shall think best to the setting forth of God's honour and glory . . . without error or superstition,' the author is careful to point out that 'in these our doings, we condemn no other nations.'

§ 21. The general impression created on the Catholic bishops by this treatise could not but be favourable, yet in reality, under the head of these ceremonies of little moment, which the Preface never specifies, was included the Mass and the whole of that ritual with which belief in the Real Presence was bound up. It also states plainly enough Cranmer's own principles. He was not an extremist.

He did not propose, as some did, to cut away all things and start afresh. He admitted that there were some things in themselves indifferent, i.e., things not ordained of God in Scripture. He also felt, like Luther and most of the greater reformers, a certain respect for tradition, 'as much as may be with the true setting forth of Christ's religion.' All this the treatise on Ceremonies makes plain. But, interpreted in the light of Cranmer's known views and of what the Prayer Book actually does, it also makes plain that on all essential points it was intended to be genuinely Protestant. The emphasis that is laid on 'the most pure Word of God' tells us of the Protestant basis upon which Cranmer was working. The 'true setting forth of Christ's religion,' which is mentioned casually as a sufficient reason for 'innovations and new-fangleness,' otherwise reprehensible, is the Protestantism which the Prayer Book inculcates. The abuses which have 'blinded the people and obscured the glory of God' are the Catholic doctrines and practices which on that account in the Prayer Book are 'clean cut away and rejected.' The assertion that no man ought to 'take in hand nor presume to appoint or alter any publick or common order in Christ's Church, except he be lawfully called and authorised thereunto,' combined with the assertion that 'every country should use such ceremonies as they shall think best,' is Cranmer's way of saying that he himself has been appointed by the King to change the religion of England. Even the promise of further changes (upon just causes) is not forgotten. It is the delicate way in which all this is done, the subtle insinuation that after all only small things are in question, the clever mingling of respect for antiquity and the Fathers with proposals for the reform of abuses, that gives to this treatise an ambiguous tone. It suggested that no radical change was contemplated, and seemed to imply, as Thirlby remarked in Parliament, that ceremonies, though abolished, were not condemned.

The Rites for administering the Sacraments, thus introduced, naturally seemed more orthodox than they really were, though for that matter they were unorthodox, as is Protestantism itself, mainly by omission. None of these rites were called Sacraments, not even Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Neither was there any mention of Sacraments in the Catechism for children about to be confirmed, still less of the Real Presence; though, when confirmed, a child might receive. These points were added by Nowell, and inserted in the Prayer Book Catechism in the reign of James. There was, as there is to-day, a rite called 'Confirmation' (without chrism), a form of solemnisation of matrimony, and orders for the visitation and communion of the sick, for the burial of the dead,

and for the purification of women; but, except that confession was permitted to those who are troubled in conscience, there was no trace of the Sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction. They are not forbidden by the Prayer Book, nor indeed is any other Catholic rite, for that was unnecessary. It was the Act of Uniformity, not the Prayer Book, that was to perform the final operation.

§ 22. Thus far the Prayer Book as a whole—which was what the Catholic bishops were asked to subscribe. In it the question of the Mass was purposely treated merely as a detail, though in reality it was the main question at issue. It appears as 'The Supper of the Lord and Holy Communion, commonly called the Mass.' In it, with a view to giving it a Catholic appearance, Cranmer had kept the ancient framework, order and phraseology, a canon, many of the old ceremonies, several passages which suggested the Real Presence, and withal had so skilfully substituted his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for the original sacrifice of the Body and Blood that Gardiner thought the Mass was really there. He gives the following reasons for so doing:—(1) The Supper was a propitiatory sacrifice because prayers were still offered for the living and the dead as in the ancient canon; (2) there was still a prayer that Christ's Body might be present to us; (3) the prayer of humble access was that 'we may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son, Jesus Christ,' which, since it was to be said kneeling, implied adoration; (4) the words of administration also implied that Christ's Body was really present; (5) so, too, did the rubric, taken from the Order of Communion of 1548, which stated that 'men must not think less to be received in the part than in the whole, but in each of them the whole Body of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.'

Gardiner, in short, was clean deceived. He had concentrated on the question of the Real Presence, which he thought was intended because certain phrases seem to imply it, but had entirely failed to remark that, even if Christ's Body and Blood were really present, there is no suggestion whatsoever that they are offered by way of sacrifice, still less offered for the living and the dead. All that is offered by way of sacrifice in Cranmer's 'Mass' is prayer and thanksgiving, and it is by prayer and the oblation on the Cross, not by any oblation of Christ really present, that the dead are to be benefited and the living obtain remission of sins. The Sacrifice of the Mass proper has gone, and even the Real Presence has become doubtful, for, as Chichester pointed out, the petition that the bread and wine may be *made* unto us the Body and Blood of Christ has been changed into a petition that they may *be* unto us the Body

and Blood of Christ. All that the Communion service really teaches is that Christ is present to believing communicants in the act of communion, which is precisely what Cranmer intended it to teach, as is evident from his book on the Eucharist, published in the following year.

§ 23. The Catholic bishops found Cranmer's Communion Service distinctly unsatisfactory, and though they subscribed the Book as a whole in draft form, they did so on the distinct understanding that before publication the Communion Service and other points to which they had taken exception, would be reconsidered and revised. But they had reckoned without their host. Cranmer made a few slight modifications in the opposite sense to what the Catholic bishops desired, and then presented the Book to Parliament as having already been approved by the English Episcopate. In vain did the bishops protest that they had approved it only conditionally and that the word 'oblation' was in it then, but now was gone. The Government merely feigned surprise and pointed to the bishops' subscription. The opposition was thus placed in a false position, and, in spite of a vigorous resistance, Cranmer won, and the religion of the Prayer Book became the law of the land.

§ 24. We are now in a position to sum up the conclusions we have arrived at so far in regard to the problem with which we set out. The drawing up of the First Prayer Book was in strict accord with the Cranmer-Cromwell policy, which consisted in first creating a situation requiring a remedy, and then by way of a remedy abolishing Catholic practice. The Prayer Book summed up the changes that had already been made, and at the same time completed them by abolishing the Mass and the worship of Christ really present in the Sacrament of the altar. It was, therefore, and was intended to be, a new and Protestant *Lex Orandi* to which the *Lex Credendi* of the English Church would inevitably in time adapt itself, and the nation thereby eventually be converted to Protestantism. The First Prayer Book was made ambiguous, notably in its Communion Service, and especially in regard to the Real Presence, not because Cranmer believed in the Real Presence, but in order that, in presenting the Book to Parliament, he might be able to say, as he did say, that it had already received the sanction of the English Episcopate.

Doubtless Cranmer also had the nation at large in view, and, as Bucer and Fagius tell us, retained a certain number of ceremonies, 'lest the people, not yet having learned Christ, should be deterred by too extensive innovations from embracing His religion, and that rather they may be won over.' But the actual course of events would seem to show that this was not Cranmer's primary object.

So far as the nation and the clergy as a whole were concerned, he trusted rather to the coercive power of law established. Nor was the ambiguity of the Prayer Book intended *in the long run* to deceive anybody, for that would have defeated Cranmer's main purpose. The Protestantism of its *Lex Orandi* must be sufficiently apparent, otherwise it would be futile, and would merely obscure the issue. Ambiguity was merely a temporary expedient, as it was in the case of Royal Supremacy and the repudiation of Papal jurisdiction. The Prayer Book had to be approved, and the easiest way to get it approved was to present it as a whole, while at the same time introducing into that part of it to which exception was certain to be taken, as much ambiguity as would suggest that by a little revision it might become orthodox. That revision it would of course never receive, but the ambiguity would remain for a time and would serve the additional purpose of making the Prayer Book less repugnant than it might otherwise have been to those whom it was intended to convert.

§ 25. The subsequent history of the Prayer Book serves strongly to confirm this judgment of it. What Convocation thought of it we do not know, for the records of the Convocation to which it should have been submitted were destroyed in the Great Fire. But in all probability it was never submitted to Convocation at all, for it was published as having been drawn up by 'the Archbishop of Canterbury and other most learned and discreet bishops and learned men,' whom the King had appointed for this purpose, and no mention was made of its having been approved by Convocation either in Parliament or in the King's reply to the men of Cornwall and Devon. It was said to have been devised, like similar documents before it, because the previous Order for Communion had been 'received by some willingly, while others had dissembled and used only part, and others not at all.' In any case nobody was deceived by it; and nobody, whether Catholic or Protestant, bishop or priest or laymen, took it to be anything but a Protestant production. The Catholic bishops, who had approved it provisionally, when they found it had not been revised, voted against it, and went to prison rather than use it.

Their priests to a very large extent followed their example, and either refused to use the Prayer Book altogether, or, where this was impossible, availing themselves of the Catholic framework and order of its Communion Service, supplied its omissions, and by retaining the ancient tone and manner and ceremonies, converted it into a genuine Mass. The King and Council complain to Bonner that the new Book 'remaineth in many places of our realm either not known at all, or not used, or so used that the

people have not that spiritual delectation in the same that to good Christians appertaineth.' Peter Martyr writes that 'the perverseness of the Bishops is incredible: they oppose us with all their might, yet some of that order, though very few, were favourable to the undertaking.' Judges on circuit, justices of the peace, and schoolmasters are blamed for aiding and abetting them. Everywhere 'the enemies of religion were rampant,' amongst the laity no less than amongst their clergy. To the people at large, in fact, the new service was merely a 'May-game.' They made up ribald songs and ballads and interludes about it, interrupted the performance of it, and in places broke into open revolt because the Mass had gone.

§ 26. The reception which Protestants gave the Prayer Book, especially the genuine foreign Protestants who had been so strenuously urging Cranmer on, was no less unanimous. John ab Ulnis rejoices that Cranmer has recovered from his dangerous lethargy of Consubstantiation and has rejected the carnal eating. Peter Martyr describes him as a mighty theologian and regards Transubstantiation as exploded. 'There has been much fluctuation,' he says, 'but innovation has now gone so far that the government cannot retrace its steps.' Bucer and Fagius write to Strasburg that, though concessions have been made in regard to ceremonies, candles, the commemoration of the dead, and the use of chrism, it does not matter, for there is no superstition in them, and they are to be retained, so Cranmer has assured them, only for a time. Of the Protestant party, therefore, some would appear to have approved not only Cranmer's reforms, but also his method of introducing them. But not so the Swiss reformers and Hooper. One of the former, writing to Bullinger, complains alike of the retention of ceremonies and of 'an ambiguity and trickery of language unwarrantable in the cause of religion'; while Hooper describes the Prayer Book as of 'defective and doubtful construction and in some respects manifestly impious.' Bucer also changed his opinion as to Cranmer's method, when the effects of it had become more apparent. Writing to the King in 1551, he thus summarises the situation:

> Your sacred Majesty [he says] hath already found by experience how great are the evils which ensued on taking away by force false worship from Your people without sufficient preliminary instruction. The instruments of impiety have been snatched from them by Proclamations and the observance of the true religion has been imposed by Royal command. Some have on this account made horrible sedition, others have raised perilous dissensions in the state, and to this day, wherever they can, they either cause new trouble or increase what has

been already excited. Some turn the prescribed form of service into a papistical abuse. Although it is now in the vulgar tongue, the 'sacrificers' recite it of set purpose so indistinctly that it cannot be understood, whilst the people altogether refuse to understand or to listen. Not a few of the priests show forth the sacred communion of Christ as a papistical Mass, and the people are present with no other intention than to assist at the Mass itself.

As a remedy for these evils the writer implores the King to have 'the mysteries of the Kingdom' explained, and begs of him not to listen to those who 'will that the religion of Christ be thrust upon men only by proclamations and by laws, and who say that it is enough if the sacred services of Christ are said to the people it matters not how.'[1]

5. *The Process by which Ambiguity was Removed.*

§ 27. (*a*) *Destruction of the Altars.*—Cranmer, however, was rooted to the principle of a *Lex Orandi*, and was convinced it would be successful as the instrument of England's conversion if only it were faithfully used. Accordingly all other service books were ordered to be destroyed. Bishops who refused to enforce the official one were deprived, and new bishops appointed in their place. People who stayed away from church, or sent a servant to represent them, were compelled to attend; while revolts were ruthlessly suppressed by the aid of foreign mercenaries. Moreover, the council now commanded 'for the sake of order' that tables should be substituted for altars, since 'the Lord's board should be rather after the form of a table than an altar'; and a visitation of the dioceses took place to see that this order was complied with.[2] It was a somewhat

[1] *De Regno Christi*, II, v, pp. 60, 61.

[2] Cf. the account of Ridley's visitation of 1549 in *A History of the English Church*, vol. iv. (Gairdner). Ridley orders the substitution of a table for an altar expressly in order that 'the form of a table may more move and turn the simple from the old superstitious opinions of the popish mass and to the right use of the Lord's Supper.' He also expressly forbids any minister to 'counterfeit the popish mass,' either by 'kissing the Lord's board, washing the hands or fingers after the Gospel or the receipt of the holy communion, shifting the book from one place to another, laying down and licking the chalice after the communion, blessing his eyes with the sudary thereof, or patten, or crossing his head with the same, holding his forefingers and thumbs joined together toward the temples of his head after the receiving of the sacrament, breathing on the bread or chalice, saying the Agnus before the communion, showing the sacrament openly before the distribution, or making any elevation thereof, ringing of the sacring bell, or setting any light upon the Lord's board' (*ib.* p. 280). Yet Ridley is supposed to have been the most Catholic of Anglican reformers!

drastic way of preventing priests from converting the Communion Service into a papistical abuse, but it was at any rate effective wherever the order was obeyed, for, though priests might celebrate the Anglican rite on a board in the middle of the church, they could hardly say Mass in this fashion.

§ 28. (*b*) *The Ordinal.*—There remained the Catholic Pontifical which plainly taught that priests were ordained not merely to forgive sins or to administer sacraments, but primarily and above all to offer the Holy Sacrifice. This idea must also be got rid of, if the Mass was to disappear altogether, for priests who were ordained to say Mass, might do so in private in spite of the Prayer Book and the destruction of public altars, should opportunity arise; and in any case belief in their power to say Mass would remain.

The new Ordinal made many changes in the old rites for ordaining deacons and priests and for consecrating bishops; but its chief effect was to take clean away from these rites all traces of a priest's sacrificial character, and in view of the completeness with which this was done there cannot be the slightest doubt but that it was done deliberately. Not only had Cranmer given up belief in the Mass, but he had also given up—and that as early as 1540—belief in a sacerdotal order. Bishops, parsons, vicars, and other priests for him are but officers, appointed by the King to that ministration. The 'divers comely ceremonies and solemnities' used in the admission of many of these officers 'be not of necessity,' he says, 'but only for a goodly order and seemly fashion; for if such officers were committed without such solemnity, they were nevertheless truly committed. And there is no more promise of God that grace is given in committing of the ecclesiastical office, than it is in the committing of the civil office.' [1]

The three orders or offices of bishops, priests, and deacons Cranmer kept on the ground that, as the Preface to the Ordinal states, they have existed from the Apostles' time. He also retained with certain modifications 'the comely ceremonies and solemnities' by which these offices were committed, on the ground that 'no man might presume to execute any of them, except he first be called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as were requisite to the same,' and secondly because to approve and admit to such offices by 'public prayer with imposition of hands' was both customary and a sign of reverence. All of which is strictly in accord with the principles laid down by the Prayer Book that 'without some ceremonies it is impossible to keep any quiet order or discipline in the Church,' and that, 'granting some ceremonies convenient to be had,' the old are preferable to the new, provided

[1] *Stillingfleet MSS.*, xxi, 1; *Lambeth*, 1108, fol. 71.

they be compatible with 'the true setting forth of Christ's religion,' by which Cranmer, of course, understood his own.

§ 29. That Cranmer should have intended the Preface of the Ordinal, or the Ordinal itself, to be ambiguous is well nigh inconceivable. First of all there was no reason why he should have made them ambiguous. The Ordinal was not submitted either to the Catholic bishops or to Convocation. It was first drawn up, and indeed was actually used by Cranmer and Latimer in 1549. Then, in 1550, a Bill was introduced into Parliament approving a new Ordinal 'to be drawn up by six Bishops and six others appointed by the King,' and within a week the Ordinal was ready for publication. Secondly, ambiguity had served its purpose the moment that the Prayer Book had received the subscription of the Catholic bishops, and from that moment Cranmer began to get rid of it. He cut out the word 'oblation' forthwith, had already begun to destroy the altars, and was about to revise the Prayer Book itself so as to remove its ambiguity. His aim, therefore, at the moment when the Ordinal was drawn up was not to increase, but rather to diminish, the Catholic appearance of his *Lex Orandi*, that thereby he might render it more effective, and it was for this reason that the new Ordinal was imposed. In it there is still a form of 'ordering priests,' but the functions of a 'priest' are most carefully and precisely defined, and amongst them that of offering sacrifice is not included. Nor does the term 'priest' occur in the 'form' by which that officer of the Church is appointed, though it was inserted a hundred years later. Cranmer's Ordinal is not only, from the Catholic point of view, deficient, in that there is no reference whatsoever to the primary and essential function for which a priest or a bishop is ordained, but it was drawn up by those who ruled the English Church at this time with the deliberate intention of excluding this function, and unfortunately the English Church both accepted and used it.

§ 30. *One* function of a priest, however, in which Catholics believe but which most Protestants reject, Cranmer did keep in his Ordinal. He retained the second imposition of hands (= the third, if we count the first as dual) together with the words: 'Receive the Holy Ghost. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven,' etc., thereby implying in one so ordained power or authority to absolve. This was strictly in accordance with the Prayer Book, which permits those who 'feel their conscience troubled with any weighty matter,' especially if they be sick, to make a special confession and to be absolved with the old Catholic formula. Doubtless many Anglicans understand this formula to be merely a declaratory statement, and so also may Cranmer have

done, but the doctrine implied by his *Lex Orandi*, on this as on other points, in itself is clear.

It is *not*, however, the Catholic doctrine, for in the Prayer Book 'penance' is not one of the Sacraments; nor is it necessary for those who after Baptism have fallen into sin, but merely permissible. The power to forgive sin, moreover, in Catholic doctrine is not the primary function of a priest, but an adjunct to it, though conveyed by the same sacramental rite, whereas in the Ordinal it is the only distinctively Catholic function for the exercise of which the Ordinal even *suggests* that the Holy Ghost is given. Cranmer's belief was that 'no grace is given in committing of the ecclesiastical office'; he admitted merely authority. Hence the further words 'Be thou a faithful dispensor of the Word of God, and of His holy Sacraments' are expressed merely in the form of a command.

§ 31. (*c*) *The Second Prayer Book.*—The Ordinal completed the *Lex Orandi* of the English Church now become Protestant in all essential features. There was still, however, the ambiguity of the First Prayer Book to be got rid of, if it was to become a complete success. In it there was scarcely a single passage of the ancient Canon that had not been tampered with, but the retention of the ancient framework still made it possible by a little manipulation and a few prayers, said secretly, to transform the Communion Service into 'a papistical abuse.' Cranmer, therefore, in accordance with his promise, now decided to abolish an ambiguity which had already served its purpose and was only being abused.[1]

The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, as amended by the Second Prayer Book, is practically the same as that in use in the Anglican Church to-day. In it there is no Canon. The Communion follows immediately after the words of Institution. Of the prayers for the living and the dead which had suggested to Gardiner the idea of a propitiatory sacrifice, the prayer for the dead is omitted and the prayer for the living inserted immediately after the Offertory and separated from the more solemn part of the rite by an exhortation. There is no prayer that the gifts on the altar may be sanctified. The term 'altar' is never used. The term 'sacrifice' is used only of the Sacrifice of the Cross, except in one of the post-communion prayers, which reads:

> we, thy humble servants, entirely desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this *our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving* . . . and here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, *ourselves, our souls and bodies*, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee,

[1] Cf. Gairdner, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

—surely a sufficiently innocuous statement, yet one for which an alternative is none the less provided.

The order and framework of the Mass also has disappeared. There is no Introit. The Kyrie is mingled with the Ten Commandments. The Gloria relegated to the end. The Lord's Prayer is twice said, but not at all in the customary place. There is no Pax and no Agnus. The preparation for Communion, with the General Confession, comes before the words of Institution. Henceforth, if a priest of the Anglican Church wished to say Mass, the only thing for him to do was either to say it from memory or to borrow a Missal, as our modern Anglicans do. The Communion Service of the revised Prayer Book has ceased even to resemble the Mass.

§ 32. The denial of the Real Presence was by no means vital to the Protestantism of Cranmer's day, and many of his colleagues and advisers from abroad still held it in one form or another. As, however, the type of Protestantism which Cranmer wished to impose upon the English Church was his own and not theirs, he made a very serious and very effective attempt to get rid of this doctrine also. In the Sanctus of the new Prayer Book the words 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord' are left out. The words of administration no longer contain any mention of the Body and Blood of Christ. The rubric which referred to the whole of Christ's body as present in each part was dropped. So also, on the advice of Bucer, was the rubric which specified the quantity of bread and wine to be used, lest it should suggest that 'there was something wrong in applying what was left over to common use, as though it were divine or holy apart from its use in communion.' The sacrament was still to be received kneeling, but inasmuch as 'no order can be so perfectly devised, but it may be of some, either for their ignorance and infirmity, or else of malice and obstinacy, misconstrued, depraved, and interpreted in wrong part,' the famous Black Rubric points out that by kneeling it is not meant

> that any adoration is done, or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental Bread and Wine there bodily received, or unto any real and essential presence there being of Christ's natural flesh and blood . . . for as concerning Christ's natural Body and Blood they are in heaven and not here.

The necessity for reservation, which might also be incidentally a cause of superstition, was obviated by substituting for the practice of carrying communion to the sick, the practice of celebrating in the sick man's house.

Doubtless some slight ambiguity remained in the Prayer

Book even after Cranmer had done with it, and this has been slightly increased by later additions especially in regard to that vexed question of a Real Presence. But it is difficult to discover this ambiguity unless one deliberately searches for it, and it is certain that Cranmer did not intend it to be there,[1] though he still retained on principle and as the head of a National Church certain ceremonies which he regarded as harmless, but which many of his supporters disliked and later on were vigorously to impugn.

§ 33. (*d*) *The Articles.*—As in Henry VIII's reign changes were first made and then justified by a declaratory statement of the principles underlying them, so now Cranmer, having completed his *Lex Orandi*, set forth in a *Lex Credendi* the principles upon which he had been acting. The Articles, like the Prayer Book, are supposed to be ambiguous. But again there is no reason whatsoever why Cranmer should have made them so. Nobody was to be asked to approve them. They were *said* to have been agreed upon by bishops and other godly men in the Convocation of 1552, but, as Cranmer himself, when challenged, was forced to admit, this merely meant that they had been drawn up *in time of* Convocation. They were in fact drawn up by Cranmer and a small committee, as was the Ordinal; and were approved by nobody but himself. They belong, moreover, to the period in which Cranmer was getting rid of ambiguity, and were officially declared to have been devised for this very purpose, namely, 'for the *avoiding* of diversities of opinion and for the establishment of *consent* concerning true religion,' and that this was the real reason for their publication is confirmed by the Canons which Cranmer was about to issue when the reign came suddenly to an end. The fifth of these Canons pronounces those who shall declare the Articles to be erroneous to be *eo ipso* excommunicated, while the thirty-sixth says that the clergy must subscribe them willingly and *ex animo*. The Articles were certainly not intended to be ambiguous, therefore, but just the contrary. Neither are they ambiguous if we consider them in relation to their author's known convictions, aims, and principles.

§ 34. The Protestant rule of faith, suggested by the Preface to the Prayer Book and by the treatise on Ceremonies as the ground of Cranmer's reforms, is plainly stated in Article VI. The sole test of what is necessary for salvation is Holy Scripture and what may be proved by Holy Scripture. From which the following inferences are drawn:

[1] Cf. Cranmer's letter to John a Lasco, where he expressly states that he has 'no wish to be shifting or unstable, or to deal in ambiguities. *Miscellaneous Writings* (Parker Soc.), letter cclxxxv.

(1) that what is *read in*, or *may be proved by*, most certain warrants of Holy Scripture is 'thoroughly to be received and believed,' v.g., the three Creeds, Nicene, Athanasian, and Apostles', which the Anglican Church accepts on this ground;[1]

(2) that what is *repugnant* to Scripture ought thoroughly to be repudiated, v.g. Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration as well of Images as of Reliques, the Invocation of Saints, and also the Sacrifices of Masses, which, though not stated to be repugnant to Scripture in so many words, are condemned as repugnant to the Scriptural doctrine of the sufficiency of Christ's Atonement, and again as *a fortiori* repugnant to Scripture in that they are 'blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits;'[2]

(3) that what is *not* read in, or is *not* demonstrable from, Scripture cannot be 'ordained as necessary to salvation,' or 'enforced to be believed' as necessary to salvation either by Churches or by General Councils;[3]

Whence it follows:

(4) from (2) that all the Churches and also General Councils have erred 'in matters of faith' and in 'things pertaining unto God,' and from (3) that they have erred also, 'in manner of ceremonies,' in that they have ordained things 'not read in Scripture' as necessary to salvation;[4] and finally

(5) that, this being the case, and since it is not necessary for traditions and ceremonies to be everywhere alike, it is the duty of National Churches to take over the function of determining what should be done in matters not read in Scripture.[5]

§ 35. Granted Cranmer's premisses, the argument of the Articles is beautifully clear and logically coherent. But many Anglicans do not admit an exclusively Scriptural rule of faith, and in consequence repudiate Cranmer's conclusions. They are also reluctant to admit that Cranmer draws them, and have all manner of ingenious ways of showing that he does not. They distinguish between Catholic and Romish doctrines, and assert that what is condemned in Article XXXI is not the Sacrifice of the Mass, but the Sacrifices of Masses conceived as distinct from the Sacrifice of the Cross, and hence as *adding* to its merits or as *themselves* remitting pain or guilt. But in the mind of those who framed the Articles Romish doctrines and Catholic doctrines were the same thing, and until recently have been understood to be the same thing by all Anglicans. What Cranmer intended to condemn was not the

[1] Articles VI and VIII. [2] Articles XXVIII, XXII, XXXI.
[3] Articles XIX, XX, XXI, XXXIV.
[4] Articles XIX, XXI. [5] Article XXXIV.

supposed teaching of one or two schoolmen, hypothetical or real, but the actual teaching of the whole of Christendom—he expressly enumerates *all four* of the ancient Patriarchates, which in his view on these matters had seriously erred. The argument he uses in Article XXXI, which is the ordinary one used by Protestants of his day, is in reality invalid; for the Sacrifices of Masses do not *add* to the merits of the Sacrifice on the Cross, but merely re-enact it mystically and apply its merits, in which, being one with it, they share. But Cranmer does not say that Sacrifices of Masses add to the merits of the Cross: he condemns them outright as blasphemous and deceitful; and in the condemnation of erroneous doctrine by ecclesiastical authority it is not the argument or ground of the condemnation that is binding in conscience, but the condemnation itself. Knowing, moreover, as we do, from other sources that Cranmer so regarded the Mass, and that his deliberate aim and declared intention was to get rid of it altogether, it is impossible to suppose that he intended either this Article or any other Article to mean less than it seems to mean. He was out to condemn Catholic doctrine, and he did so, in each case stating his reason for so doing. So far from wishing to be ambiguous, he is, on the contrary, most careful to be precise and clear. He condemns each Catholic doctrine precisely in so far as he thinks that it ought to be condemned, whether simply as 'not ordained by Scripture,' or as 'repugnant to Scripture,' or as 'blasphemous,' the last form of condemnation being the strongest.

§ 36. The distinction between what is plainly taught in or plainly repugnant to Scripture and what is *not* plainly taught therein or read therein at all, is also of vital importance for a right understanding of Cranmer's peculiar doctrine of National Churches. Where Scripture speaks plainly, strictly speaking neither a National Church, nor any other Church has either jurisdiction or authority. What is thus ordained is 'ordained by God,' and the authority for it is God's own word, of which the Church is merely 'a witness and keeper.'[1] On the other hand, where Scripture has not spoken, or has spoken indistinctly, the Church has authority, and though that authority be merely a 'common' or human authority, it is to be obeyed, and one who openly offends against it is to be rebuked as one who 'offendeth against the common order of the Church and hurteth the authority of the Magistrate.'[2] This authority is defined in Article XXXIV as extending to 'Traditions and

[1] Article XX, and cf. Art. XXI, where it is laid down that General Councils in ordaining things necessary to salvation, must declare the same to be 'taken out of Scripture.'

[2] Article XXXIV.

Ceremonies,' and in Article XX (in a phrase added in the time of Queen Elizabeth) as 'power to decree rites or ceremonies and authority in controversies of faith.' In the latter case it is attributed simply to 'the Church,' but, since the phrase was added for the purpose of augmenting the authority of the National Church, it is obviously the *National* Church that is meant, and it was understood in this sense both by those whose authority it was intended to support and by those whom it sought to reduce to obedience. It is, moreover, definitely asserted in Article XXXIV that

> it is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly alike; [that they] may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word; [and that] every particular or national church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying.

Where, therefore, Scripture is silent or not clear, there is question only of man's authority, and there the National Church has a right to ordain as she wills.

§ 37. Read in the light of this doctrine the alleged ambiguity of the Articles which deal with the Real Presence, the Seven Sacraments, and 'Order' disappears. He would be a bold man who would assert categorically in face of John vi., Corinthians xi. 27–29, and the words of Institution, that the doctrine of the Real Presence is repugnant to Scripture, and though Cranmer vigorously repudiated this doctrine, not even he ventured to go thus far. Accordingly he treats it, and all that it implies, as a matter of 'traditions and ceremonies' which each National Church has a right to determine in its own way. He himself determined it for his own Church in the original articles by laying down that in the Anglican Church 'no one is to profess or believe in the real or corporeal presence of Christ's flesh and blood in the Eucharist.' In Elizabeth's reign this negative statement was changed for a positive one, so that the doctrine of the Anglican Church in this 'controversy of faith' now is that 'the Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner,' and that the 'mean' whereby it is received and eaten is faith.[1]

§ 38. The doctrine of the Articles in regard to the rites by which belief in the Real Presence in the ancient Church was expressed, is based on the same principle. Article XXXIV having laid down the general principle that National Churches have a

[1] Article XXVIII.

right to change or abolish rites and ceremonies not ordained of God, Articles XXV and XXVIII state that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper falls within this category, since it is 'not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up or worshipped.' The action of the English Church in abolishing these practices is thus justified. Having determined its own faith in regard to the Real Presence, it has determined its practice accordingly, but the doctrines and practices of other nations are not condemned except by implication, or in so far as they are prescribed as 'ordained of God' or as 'necessary to salvation.'

§ 39. Similarly in regard to the Sacraments. 'There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.' Therefore the English Church keeps them. The other five 'have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God,' and hence 'have not the like nature of Sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper.'[1] Therefore they are not necessary to salvation, and the English Church is justified in changing or abolishing them, which it does on the ground that they are due in part at least to abuses and do not make 'to edifying.' Again there is no explicit condemnation of other Churches, for again in Cranmer's view there is question merely of 'tradition and ceremonies.'

The question of orders was also in Cranmer's view not determined by the teaching of Scripture, and in his day was a controverted point even among Protestants. Therefore, once again, he is content to state his own doctrine as that of the Church which he represented, and to leave other doctrines alone, except in so far as in Article XXV he traces them to a 'corrupt following of the Apostles.' Article XXIII, 'of ministering in the Congregation,' is perfectly plain and intelligible. It states that those who so minister must be 'lawfully called and sent' so to do by those who 'have publick authority given unto them in the Congregation'; and this, and nothing more than this, was what Cranmer believed and wished the English Church to believe when he made this doctrine an Article of the Anglican religion.

6. *Protestantism Manifest and Acknowledged.*

§ 40. Who is right, then, those who hold their Church to be Protestant and would see it united with other Protestant bodies, or those who regard it as Catholic and would prefer a Catholic or an Orthodox reunion? Surely when one considers the history of

[1] Article XXV.

the official documents in which the religion of the English Church is set forth, there can be no hesitation as to the answer. The Prayer Book and the Articles are not merely Protestant in appearance, but Protestant through and through. Interpreted in a Catholic sense they are contradictory and unintelligible, because they were never meant to be so interpreted. Interpreted in a Protestant sense they form a wonderfully consistent and logical whole. Those who drew them up did not intend them to be ambiguous, except in the first instance and in regard to particular points which they later on set right. They intended them to be manifestly Protestant, devised them in fact as a means whereby England herself might be brought to a Protestant belief, and in this they were eminently and indisputably successful: she became Protestant.

Those who accepted Cranmer's religion as thus laid down, and those who repudiated it, also took it to be Protestant, and that without any exception and for centuries, right until the dawn of the Catholic revival. In Mary's reign the Articles and Prayer Book were repudiated by Queen and Parliament and Nation because they were Protestant, and those who renounced them sought absolution from heresy as well as from schism. In Elizabeth's reign everybody recognised that a choice must be made between 'two religions,' two 'messes of meat,' and the Government chose the Protestant one. Parliament knew it and resisted, but was soon overruled. The Catholic bishops knew it, and quitted forthwith the Anglican Communion, all save one. The clergy knew it, and hundreds were deprived or resigned. Grindal had to ordain 100 new ministers in one month; Parker 150 in one day. The first Convocation of Elizabeth's reign declared for the old religion, inclusive of Papal Supremacy: when the second met in 1563 at least two-thirds of the members were new, and of the rest many took no part in the proceedings. The laity also knew it. They had to be compelled by law to go to church, and even then many refused, sacrificing their property and risking their lives for the faith that the Prayer Book denied. Everywhere the new bishops encountered 'stoutness, blindness, obstinacy.' In 1569 there was a revolt 'to restore the Catholic religion.'

Nor were those who accepted 'the change of religion' less unanimous. Those who did so reluctantly sought to modify the new religion in a Catholic sense, but succeeded in a few minor points only. Those who welcomed it, sought to make it yet more Protestant by cutting out some of its ceremonies. They also failed: the new religion was already 'established.' Yet neither the one nor the other of these parties ever dreamt that this religion was anything but genuinely Protestant. The Puritans thought

the Protestantism of the Prayer Book was substantially sound, but found in it still some small blemishes: Cranmer had got rid of Popery, but had kept 'the straws and chips and rags'; and with this judgment reformers at Geneva and Strasburg, to whom both parties, bishops included, were constantly appealing, thoroughly agreed.

§ 41. Neither did the High Church party, though less enthusiastic about the term than their opponents, hesitate to call their religion Protestant. Chillingworth's 'Religion of Protestants' was a standard work on the Anglican position and had great influence. Laud, during his trial, declared that he was innocent of in 'any way blemishing the true Protestant religion established in the Church of England.' Charles went to war, so he said, in defence of this Protestant religion, and Charles II declared his affection for it; while Convocation in 1689, though disliking the term 'Protestant Church,' had no difficulty in using the term 'Protestant' of its religion, which British Sovereigns henceforth were to take an oath to defend in this sense.

True, the High Church party in Stuart days, though admitting that their religion was Protestant, still claimed that their Church was a member of the Church Catholic, by which they meant that it was one with it in 'primitive and apostolic' faith. But the faith which they held to be 'apostolic and primitive' was their own faith, not that which the Church Catholic held to be apostolic and primitive. One and all repudiated Transubstantiation and the Mass as a propitiatory sacrifice. One and all repudiated the worship of Christ's Body and Blood, present corporeally in the Eucharist. Some held a dynamic presence: a few got as far as Consubstantiation; but none taught the worship of the Sacrament, and in regard to the Mass none got beyond Cranmer's position of a commemorative sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, of alms, and of our bodies and souls. The limits of Anglican belief on these points are, in fact, clearly defined by the official teaching of the Canons of 1640. Fearful of 'idolatry committed in the Mass,' the Church explains that, though the 'holy table' has now been restored to its old place, this 'doth not imply that it is or ought to be esteemed a true and proper altar, whereon Christ is again really sacrificed'; nor is the 'reverence' which should be made on entering the church meant to 'exhibit any religious worship to the communion-table, the east, or the church, or anything therein contained'; nor yet, when that gesture is performed in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, does this imply 'any opinion of a corporeal presence of the body of Jesus Christ on the holy table or in the mystical elements.'

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On the main points at issue between Catholics and Protestants, then, the whole Anglican communion was agreed. There were slight differences in regard to those Articles which dealt with 'ceremonies and controversies of faith,' and which were admittedly less fundamental than the rest. High Churchmen clung to apostolic succession and to some sort of sacrifice and some sort of Presence in the act of communion, while Low Churchmen were opposed both to this and to the introduction of more ceremonies. But in regard to the more fundamental points which had been determined on the basis of Scripture, and also in regard to an enduring and adorable Presence, High Churchmen were no less loyal to the Articles than were their opponents. In these matters they held with Cranmer and with all other Protestant reformers that the Catholic Church had erred by introducing corrupt and even idolatrous doctrines into the pure faith of apostolic times, to which their own Church alone had returned.

§ 42. The attitude of advanced Anglicans of to-day is totally and radically different. They not only repudiate the official declarations of their Church in matters which it treats as not determined by Scripture, but they repudiate it also in regard to Transubstantiation, the Mass, Purgatory, saints and images—matters which it treats as definitely and finally determined by the plain words of Scripture. They also determine the important question of the carrying about, lifting up, and worshipping of the Sacrament in the opposite sense to that of the Articles, and this in spite of the adverse decision of the constituted authority of their Church, episcopal and civil. The zeal, the devotion, the sincerity, the wonderful self-sacrifice of the men who are carrying on this Catholic propaganda is unquestionable. They have also done more, indefinitely more, for the Catholic cause in England than those not of their Church could possibly have done. But in face of the plain teaching of the Prayer Book and Articles, of the known views and intentions of those who framed them, and of the unanimous verdict alike of contemporaries and of posterity, friendly and hostile, it is impossible to regard their attitude, in spite of the ability and ingenuity with which it is defended, as anything but in flagrant contradiction with their position as professed members of the Anglican communion.

7. Anglicanism as a Via Media.

§ 43. Between the Anglican and other Protestant Churches there is a difference, as there is between all Protestant Churches, since each has inherited the characteristics of the reformer who

devised its distinctive religion. There is also in the case of the Anglican Church a certain continuity between the ancient and the reformed Churches, for, whereas other reformers repudiated the Church Catholic, denied its doctrines, and took over its functions *as individuals*, and hence had to found new Churches, Cranmer did not. He repudiated the Church Catholic, denied its doctrines, and took over its much-abused functions *in the name of the Church of which he was Primate*. In other words he reformed the Church from within, keeping its temporal inheritance, and keeping also—what in his opinion and in that of his colleagues was of little consequence—its polity, together with some of its ceremonies and the framework and order of some of its rites. Hence High Churchmanship and Catholic claims. Yet in faith, which is the thing that matters, there is no more continuity between the Thirty-nine Articles and Catholic faith than there is between the latter and the Augsburg or the Westminster Confessions. Neither are the Articles less explicit in repudiating the authority of the Church Catholic, for they repudiate it as the rule of faith, substituting Scripture; repudiate its teaching in regard to the Sacrifice of the Mass, Transubstantiation, etc., which then was, and still is, universal throughout the Church Catholic; repudiate its infallibility, both that of the four great patriarchates of which it is composed and that of the General Councils through which it speaks; and repudiate its jurisdiction and judgment, explicitly in regard to what is not contained in Scripture, and implicitly in regard to what is contained in Scripture in that the Anglican Church in the person of Cranmer takes over the function of deciding what Scripture does or does not teach, and in this matter prefers his judgment to that of the Church Catholic, which it condemns.

§ 44. It surely must be obvious even to High Anglicans that the Catholic Church cannot possibly recognise the claim of the Anglican Church to be one with it so long as that Church retains as the profession and expression of its faith Articles and a Prayer Book which were expressly devised for the purpose of repudiating and destroying the faith that the Catholic Church professes. True, one may now interpret the Articles as one pleases, and also apparently may use or not use the Prayer Book without penalty; but that only makes matters worse, for it means that the Anglican Church, which once claimed the guidance of the Holy Ghost, has ceased to do so and is leaving matters to take their course. Its clergy may adopt a Catholic faith, or, if they prefer, may deny the Resurrection—a mark of comprehensiveness which is not to be, and never has been, found in any branch of the Church Catholic. What is the consequence? The Anglican Church is drawn two ways, and

cannot go either for fear lest, if it attempt to move, it should burst asunder. It has become like a miniature Christendom, as diverse in its parties as Christendom is in its Churches, and as great a stumbling-block alike to itself and to those that witness its conflicts. Under such circumstances reunion on Catholic lines for the time being is plainly impossible, for however tolerant the Catholic Church ought to be toward heresy without, it cannot tolerate heresy within and at the same time claim to be a Church in which the Spirit of Truth lives and through which it speaks.

§ 45. Some Anglicans seem to think that the chief obstacles to reunion from the Catholic point of view are Papal Infallibility and Anglican Orders, and hence suggest that in the event of reunion Anglicans should be conditionally reordained and should acknowledge Papal Infallibility, provided it expresses itself only after the Pope has consulted with the bishops of the Catholic world. These are difficulties doubtless, and real ones. In view of the known intention of the framers of the Anglican Ordinal in which that intention is embodied, and of the radical and momentous differences between this Ordinal and those which it superseded, all of them deliberately introduced and for a definite purpose; in view of the deliberate omission of all reference to the Sacrifice of the Mass in its rite of Ordination to the Priesthood; of its *one* imposition of hands which is accompanied by words which signify at most the conveyance of the power of absolution; and again of the significant use of a word of command in conveying the right to administer sacraments, which is parallel with the giving of authority to preach the Word of God and is strictly conformable to the un-Catholic doctrine of Article XXIII—in view of these things and also of the fact that, unless some radical difference of intention was involved, it is impossible to explain why the ancient rites should have been so altered, it is for Catholics inconceivable that the same power is conveyed by this mutilated rite as was conveyed by that which preceded it. Reordination is necessary, and it is for the Church, not the individual, to settle whether it be conditional or absolute, as she has done already. So also is the acceptance of Papal Infallibility necessary, since for Catholics the world over it has already been defined, and defined as operative without any restricting clause about the need for consulting the Catholic episcopate. But the bar to a Catholic reunion is not in these points only, or even mainly. It lies in a radical difference in the professions of faith which the respective Churches have officially approved, in a radical difference in the worship which by each is officially sanctioned, and in a radical difference in their respective

attitudes toward faith, which in the one case is intransigent in all matters that have already been defined and in the other is tolerant of every opinion, however heterodox, even in its clergy and its bishops.

§ 46. That way out for the present is blocked, though many Anglicans are zealously doing their best to remove the obstacles which obstruct it. But what of the other way? If the Anglican Church were bound by the decrees of Trent or the Vatican, reunion with the Free Churches would be impossible; but it is not so bound. If its own profession of faith were such that it would admit only of a Catholic interpretation, such a reunion would still be impossible; but it neither excludes a non-Catholic interpretation nor admits of a Catholic one, if taken in its 'literal and grammatical sense' or if interpreted in the light of its history. The faith of the Articles and Prayer Book is the same as that of the Free Churches, for the latter have changed not their faith, but polity, discipline, and details in the matter of worship. On no point will the professed faith of the Anglican Church be sacrificed in the event of reunion, nor yet will the common faith of its members be sacrificed, provided Episcopacy is retained. Why then should so many be indifferent or hostile to reunion? Is it that they do not realise the importance of it? Surely not, for their Church ought to be national, but is not. Is it that they fear for the faith of Nicæa? No, for the attitude of the Free Churches is more strict in this respect than is that of their own bishops. Is it a Protestant majority that they are afraid of? But that they have already overcome once, or at least counterbalanced, and can do it again with good will. Even if many 'came over,' a Catholic leaven would be certain to remain. It would also be tolerated. The authority of the Reunited Church would be greater than that of any of the separated Churches, but it would still be only that of the collective voice of its members. It must, therefore, of necessity be comprehensive on all points of difference, or schism would ensue. And if it is to tolerate its Wesleys and Kilhams and Bournes and O'Briens and Johnsons, why not its Puseys and Newmans? Those who at the outset regard the faith of Nicæa as a maximum, will strive to whittle it away. Those who at the outset regard it as a minimum, will seek to develop it. If then the one must be endured, why not the other? A little ritualism is not repugnant now even to Nonconformists. Neither would the preaching of Catholicism be repugnant, granted a little tact; for, after all, the faith of Nicæa is Catholic, and may mean more than it says.

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§ 47. Much as one may sympathise with the aims and ideals of those Anglicans who regard themselves as Catholics, one cannot but feel that their attitude toward reunion is fraught with inconsistency and is a fatal mistake. Their claims are incompatible with their conduct. Their own Church neither teaches the doctrines which they preach, nor sanctions their practice. If she be Catholic, as they say, they should submit to her when she calls them to order. If she be not Catholic, but they are, they do not belong to her. To resist their Church, to disobey its bishops, to go counter to the doctrine of its Articles and to contemn its ordinances is to deny by their action that very Catholicity which in argument they so persistently maintain. It manifests, too, not a Catholic but a Protestant spirit, for to pick and choose what one will believe and how one will worship is no less Protestant because one appeals to Catholic tradition than if one appealed only to Scripture. Nor do those who so act, manifest much greater respect for Catholic authority than they do for Anglican. They glory in the Mass, but repudiate Papal Infallibility which vouches for the truth of the Mass. They insist upon Benediction, though for Catholics it is not a necessity; but the declaration of the Church on Anglican Orders, which Catholics are bound to accept, they treat with contempt. And even here, when pressed by the weight of evidence and the almost unanimous judgment of the non-Anglican world, they fall back upon a Protestant argument, and appeal, as do Nonconformists, to experience and value as proof of validity. It is not Catholic teaching, but their own judgment of Catholic teaching, that these men follow, though they do so with sincere good will and the best of intentions; and to insist that others, as a condition of reunion, should submit to the judgment of individuals is surely the height of unreasonableness. Nay, even if their Church be Catholic, their attitude toward reunion is still unwarranted, for in any case it is what it is—comprehensive, and the admission of the Nonconformists would neither make it more so nor less. Rather they should welcome this reunion that the scope for their labours may be enlarged. If the Free Churches of England are ever to be converted to Catholicism, reunion with the Anglican Church would seem to be the only way. For whatever else she may be or may not be, she is at any rate episcopal, and, if many of her members have no faith at all, many, too, have faith in its fulness. As a branch of the Catholic Church she has no work to do, for in that capacity she is recognised by no one except herself. But as a Church which is episcopal and Protestant, yet not without a Catholic leaven, she is in very truth a *via media* between Churches that

are Protestant and non-episcopal and the Church that is episcopal and Catholic, and by admitting to her communion the Presbyterian and the Free Churchman would be admitting them to a share in that leaven.

§ 48. That many advantages are likely to accrue to the Churches concerned from the reunion we have been discussing, is undeniable; yet it is also undeniable that in the minds of many they will be more than counterbalanced by obvious disadvantages. Though advanced Anglicans base their belief on the tradition, not of their own, but of the Greek and Roman Churches, they none the less hold fast to that tradition. Though they remain in a Church which repudiates no small portion of Catholic faith, both officially and in the belief of the majority of its members, they none the less accept almost every article of that faith, even, it may be, Papal Supremacy. They are confessedly not members of 'the Great Central Block,' whose beliefs they have adopted, and can only maintain that they are Catholics *de facto*, as well as in spirit, so it seems to us, with supreme disdain alike of the Prayer Book and Articles, of history and logic. Yet their faith is both deep and sincere; and, this being the case, reunion based on the Nicene Creed, and that to be anyhow interpreted, cannot but be almost as repugnant to them as it would be to the mind of a Greek and is to the mind of a Roman. To the argument that it would introduce a Catholic leaven amongst those who as yet do not possess it, and would bring them within what at any rate claims to be a branch of the true Church, they will reply that the leaven might work the other way, strengthening the Protestantism of their own Church, and that such a reunion would bring into existence a strong and united Church, which would at any rate be set over against, and possibly would work in opposition to, the Church that already is Catholic. To the argument that State Supremacy would be no longer necessary and might possibly disappear, as would also in all probability that other diriment impediment to Catholic reunion, the Thirty-nine Articles, thus rendering the faith of the Reunited Church Catholic at any rate in embryo, they would answer that this would not be the developed faith which they themselves profess, would by implication be a denial of that faith, and, instead of leading to a further reunion as some hope, might lead to indifference toward Catholicism and even to a pronounced antagonism.

We are far from denying that, deplorable as they may be, such contingencies might happen. The danger to Catholicism, supposing that Protestants do unite, is possibly more serious than some may imagine. The American Inter-Church World Movement

plans a union of Protestant Churches for the purpose of evangelising the world on Protestant lines. We have nothing to fear therefrom, for the Spirit of Truth is with us, but it is well that we should consider also this alternative. So also should our Anglican friends. On Catholic principles they cannot consent to reunion with Nonconformists; on Anglican principles they both can and ought so to do. The choice lies between Catholicism and Anglicanism. It is impossible to blend them. And, if the movement toward reunion develops into a Pan-Protestant project, the choice will have to be made. Reunion in these days on the basis of Nicæa to a Catholic is quite impossible. All that we claim is that on principle, and from the view-point of history, it ought not to be impossible either for an Anglican or for Presbyterians and Free Churchmen; and that for neither party would it involve either a breach with the past, or a renunciation of present-day formulæ. As to whether it would further or hinder the prospects of a Catholic reunion must depend largely upon whether such a reunion and the faith it supposes, be kept constantly in mind, or whether the faith of Nicæa be taken as ultimate and complete, in which case the reunion that is to be based on it would become not provisional but final. But for *Anglicans* to argue thus is to belie their main position. For if their Church is already a branch of the Church Catholic its faith cannot become corrupt, neither can Catholicism be thwarted but only promoted by the accession of multitudes of new members to a Church that professes its creed. While, on the other hand, if their Church be as yet Catholic only in hope and desire, to use this as an argument against the proposed reunion is to substitute fiction for fact, and to thwart a practical scheme by appeal to an unrealised fancy.

§ 49. Let us look reality in the face. As matters stand, the Churches with which the Anglican Church claims to be one are not even one with each other. Greek and Anglican, Anglican and Roman, Roman and Greek, except for the Uniates, are separate; and to assert that they are not is to deny the obvious. A reunion between the Anglican and those whom he claims ought never to have ceased to be Anglican cannot but help Anglicanism, whatever may be its consequences for ourselves. And it will certainly clarify the issue between us. Many have expressed disappointment that the Pope should have refused to send representatives to a proposed world-conference on Faith and Order. But how could he do otherwise? As the head, in our belief and his own, of Christ's true and truly world-wide communion, he could not well be represented on a bench where he would be asked to waive his prerogative and to sit as an equal with a host of little Churches,

each of them distinctly Protestant and each disagreeing with its neighbour scarcely less than it disagrees with ourselves. Granted, however, that these smaller Churches sink their differences and unite, the case will become different. The faith of the reunited Churches might conceivably develop from the position of Nicæa into that of Ephesus and Chalcedon, and on through the Lateran to Trent. The conferences of Augsburg might in that case be resumed, not without hope of success.

The hope is slender, the prospect remote, we confess, and the effect of a reunion among Protestants might be very different from what the most sanguine expect. God, too, may have another and a quicker solution in view. Yet man can only do his best. And things being as they are, it may not be waste of time to proceed with our discussion by considering now what stands in the way of a Catholic-Protestant reunion, and how best that happy event may be hastened and secured.

A NOTE ON ANGLICAN ORDERS

The attitude of the Catholic Church toward Anglican Orders is similar to that of the Anglican Church toward the orders of Free Church ministers. Anglicans hold that the succession in the Free Churches has been broken; hence regard their orders as invalid from the sacramental point of view; and, in consequence, insist that Free Church ministers must be reordained before they can be permitted to administer sacraments in the Anglican fold. Catholics hold that the succession in the Anglican Church has been broken; hence infer that her 'priests' have no power to say Mass; and, in consequence, insist upon reordination before they can be permitted to say Mass in the Catholic fold. The reason why we regard the succession as broken in the Anglican Church is primarily that the rite by which the power to say Mass was conveyed in the pre-Reformation Church has in the post-Reformation Church been so changed that it is no longer capable of conveying that power. The intention of those who remodelled the old rite was expressly to exclude that power, since they neither believed in it themselves, nor did they wish the Church for which they were acting to believe in it. And this intention they embodied in the rite which they drew up, which hence neither purports to convey, nor is capable of conveying, the essential power of the priesthood. Of the intention of those who reformed the old rite sufficient has already been said. Their success in embodying it in the rite they reformed can best be judged by comparing the old rite with the

new. Appended, therefore, are the main features of the two rites, which the reader can thus compare for himself.

THE RITE *which was superseded.* (From the Sarum Pontifical.)	THE RITE *which superseded it.* (From the Edwardine Ordinals.)
A **statement** by the bishop **of the functions of a priest,** namely that it behoves him to '*offer* (sacrifice), to *preside*, to *preach*, to *consecrate*, and to *baptize*.'	A **statement** by the bishop **of the functions of a priest,** namely that he is a 'messenger, watchman, and steward of the Lord,' who must *teach, premonish, feed, and provide* for the Lord's family, and *seek* for the sheep that are dispersed. Incidentally he must also be studious in reading and learning the Scriptures,' be 'persuaded that they contain all doctrine required of necessity for salvation,' and teach nothing as necessary to salvation but what may be concluded and proved therefrom.
The dual imposition of hands. The bishop first placed his hand on the heads of the *ordinandi* in silence (*una manu tangente*), then he and the assistant priests raised their hands above the heads of the *ordinandi*, and *prayers* were said (1) that all would join in asking God to multiply His celestial gifts upon those whom He has chosen for the office of priest, (2) that He would give them the blessing of the Holy Spirit (in some English rites 'the virtue of *sacerdotal* grace'), and (3) that He would bestow upon them the dignity of the *priesthood* and the spirit of sanctity. (*All Catholic rites, both pre- and post-reformation, contain this dual imposition of hands, together with prayers which clearly signify its import, and*	A *prayer* that God will give the *ordinandi* strength to fulfil the promises they have made, and will accomplish the work He has begun in them, followed by a request that the congregation shall pray for the same intention, and then 'there shalbe a *certain space kept in silence*.' After which there is a long **prayer** *thanking* God for having given us Jesus Christ as our Redeemer (who *after making perfect our Redemption by His death* sent into the world *apostles, prophets, evangelists, doctors*, and *pastors*, by whose labour and ministry He gathered together *a great flock* in all parts of the world to *set forth the eternal praise* of God's name) and also for having called His servants here present to the same

whether anything else be vital to the validity of the sacrament or not, all the ancient Churches regard as vital at least this.)

office and ministry; and *beseeching* Him that all which either here or elsewhere call upon His name, may continue to be thankful and daily increase in faith, so that *both* by these *ministers and* by their flocks *God's name may be glorified* and His kingdom enlarged.

The **stole** of the ordained priest was now arranged, with the words: *Accipe Jugum Domini.*

The **chasuble** was next given with the words: *Accipe Vestem Sacerdotalem.*

The **consecration of the priest's hands** with a prayer referring to the use he was to make of them in '*transforming* the bread and wine into the *Body and Blood* of *Christ.*'

The **Veni Creator.**

(*In the modern Anglican rite the* Veni Creator *has reappeared though it was absent in the Edwardine Ordinals.*)

The anointing of the priest's hands, with a prayer that they may be consecrated and blessed and so be able to *consecrate* and *bless.*

The tradition of the instruments: the chalice with wine, and paten with host, accompanied by the words: Receive power to *offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate Mass for the living and the dead.*

(*See below under 'tradition of the Bible' for the relic of this ceremony as it appeared in the* FIRST *Edwardine Ordinal.*)

(*In the East there is no tradition of the instruments, but in the West and* FOR *the West it is regarded as so vital that, if omitted, the whole rite must be repeated conditionally.*)

Mass is now said by the bishop and *by the newly ordained priests conjointly.*

The final imposition of hands, accompanied by the words: *Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins ye shall forgive, they shall be forgiven.*

The imposition of hands *by bishop and priests present,* accompanied by the words: *Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins thou dost forgive shall be forgiven,* etc., and *be* thou a faithful *dispensor* of the *word of God and* of His *holy sacraments.* In the name, etc.

(*The modern Anglican rite adds to the words: Receive the Holy Ghost, 'for the Office and work of a Priest in the Church of God,' but neither of the Edwardine Ordinals contains this.*)

The tradition of the Bible. The bishop then delivers to each the *Bible* (in the First Ordinal together with the Chalice and bread) saying: Take thou *authority* to *preach the Word of God* and to *minister the sacraments,* etc.

The congregation now sing the Creed, and all who have received Orders are to go to **the Communion** which concludes with a special collect asking God to send His special blessing upon them, '*that Thy word, spoken by their mouths, may never be spoken in vain,*' and that all may receive the same as 'Thy most holy word and *the mean of our salvation.*'

ESSAY V

THE REFORMATION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

'Truly this is my own evil, and I will bear it. My tabernacle is laid waste, all my cords are broken: my children are gone out from me and they are not: there is none to stretch forth my tent any more, and to set up my curtains. Because the pastors have done foolishly and have not sought the Lord: therefore have they not understood and all their flock is scattered.'—JEREMIAS x. 19–21.

1. *Protestantism as a Remedy for Unrighteousness*

§ 1. AN historical treatment of the problems involved in an attempt to reconcile the differences of Catholics and Protestants of necessity involves some discussion of the Protestant Reformation. The drastic and radical transformation processes which are commonly summed up under this head, were of the nature of a remedy provided by certain persons for a specific disease existing in a certain body. That disease was unrighteousness. The body in which it existed was the Church Catholic. The doctors who devised and applied the remedy were known, first as reformers, then as Protestants. Their remedy consisted in purifying the faith and practice of the Church Catholic on Biblical lines. The leading names amongst the doctors are those of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Cranmer, and John Knox, but there was a host of others besides. All the great reformers and many of the little ones set up an independent practice. They used to meet in consultation occasionally, but that was all. They were agreed as to the basic principle of the remedy, but they were not agreed either as to the number of ingredients which the prescription should contain, or as to their quantities, or as to the manner in which the medicine should be applied. Hence diversity and the problem of Protestant reunion, to solve which it is necessary to go back to the basic principle of a Biblical faith which was accepted by all Protestants, and still is accepted by most as the best remedy for unrighteousness. But Protestant reformers were not the only physicians who discovered a remedy for unrighteousness. There were Catholic ones

too, and the remedy which these doctors of the old school devised was radically different from that of the new generation. Hence if we wish to solve the problem of a Catholic-Protestant reunion, we must go back to the common purpose for which these diverse remedies were invented, and must inquire both as to their success or failure, and as to the reason of their success or failure as revealed in the experience of four centuries.

§ 2. Now it is useless to appeal to experience unless the experience in question be recognised as their own by those to whom the appeal is addressed. For that reason in dealing with the difficulties which Free Churchmen feel to reunion with Anglicans, we have treated the history of their separation more or less from the Free Church point of view. For a like reason in this essay we shall depict the Reformation and the causes that led to it more or less from the Protestant point of view. Everyone reads history, and most write it, with a certain amount of prejudice. They may not wilfully distort facts, but they select them, and even transform them to a certain extent, according to their preconceived ideas of what ought to be or to have been. History doubtless should not be written in this way, but as a matter of fact it is so written, though with less bias nowadays than formerly. In particular the Reformation is represented by Protestants as a genuine attempt to bring to light truth and to restore righteousness in a world that had lost it, while to Catholics it appears as a retrograde movement, inspired mainly by political motives, by greed and pride and bigotry. The latter seems to us the more correct view, but, since it is impossible to vindicate it here, and to assume it would be fatal to our argument, we shall here adopt the other view. If then we seem to over-emphasise the sincerity and minimise the faults of the reformers, and contrariwise to exaggerate the failings and neglect the virtues of popes, it is not because there is nothing to be said on the other side, nor yet that we are unaware of it, but simply that this is how Protestants view the Reformation, and that, whether it be the true view or not, our argument holds good.

§ 3. The character, especially of the great reformers, has been vigorously criticised and fiercely attacked. They were not saints, far from it. The violence of their language, the means they employed to gain their ends, their perpetual quarrels with, and abuse of, one another were neither edifying nor Christian. Almost all their distinctive doctrines have already been given up. There was even a semblance of insincerity about them, for quite a number of them *first* took a wife, *then* became enthusiasts for a reform which included amongst other things the abolition of celibacy.

Scarcely any of them died for their beliefs. But since Protestants are convinced of their good faith, and hold that in seeking righteousness they were perfectly sincere, so be it. Some of them were at any rate far better than others and to all the claims of charity must extend.

The sincerity and singlemindedness of the ignorant masses who followed these new prophets, imbibed their ideas, and strove so earnestly to propagate them, is less in question. These little reformers, if such we may call them, may have been, like their leaders, violent, narrow, imprudent, tactless. The ridicule they cast upon the 'little flour God,' and their hatred of the 'rags of Popery' could hardly be other than offensive to their more sober-minded neighbours, who naturally regarded them as fanatics. They were also a danger to the peace and good order of the State. But they did die, and in considerable numbers, some by fire, some drowned in tubs of water or cast into the river in sacks, some of sheer starvation. And always, or almost always, they died bravely, with the assurance that, as George Wishart put it, they would 'sup with their Saviour that night.' They were not martyrs for liberty, for but few of them believed in liberty. Nor did they in the main resent the action of their persecutors, for the latter in their view were ignorant and blind and hence had no alternative. But neither had the persecuted any alternative, convinced as they were that they alone possessed the truth. In our view they were sadly mistaken; but at any rate they claimed to die in 'the cause of truth and piety,' and were certainly in many cases quite ready so to do.

§ 4. The peculiar doctrines which the reformers taught also bear witness to the fact that righteousness was what the Reformation sought. Catholics were supposed to believe in Justification by Works. Luther substituted Justification by Faith, and in his impulsive way exaggerated it to such an extent as to deny the merit of all human action, even of charity prompted by grace. But badly as the doctrine was explained, and disastrous as were some of its consequences, it was meant to emphasise righteousness, for it taught that man must trust only in the merits of Christ, from which righteousness proceeds and without which it is impossible. Calvin's doctrine of election and predestination also implies that through God alone can righteousness come and that only the righteous are His. The 'Inner Light' of the Anabaptist who baptized again on conversion, emphasised the practical aspect of this truth: to become a Christian a man must be led by the Spirit and be truly converted. Amid the many errors which these doctrines contained, and the terrific conflict to which they led, both

between Catholics and Protestants and amongst Protestants themselves, there ran the same idea: without righteousness salvation is impossible and Christianity a mockery and delusion.

The negative doctrines of the reformers point in the same direction. Catholic practice and teaching were attacked partly on Biblical grounds, but mainly because they were thought to be a hindrance to righteousness. Indulgences, images, relics, pilgrimages were done away with, because in the use of them sincerity seemed so often to be lacking that to the reformers they appeared to be a hindrance rather than a help to devotion, and to be diverting man's attention from a higher and more spiritual kind of worship. Ceremonial was abolished for similar reasons: so were some of the sacraments. To cure an abuse by getting rid of the practice abused was certainly a drastic remedy, but here as elsewhere, the reformers claimed to be seeking a higher spirituality, a closer union with God. Nothing was of any value in their judgment, except the inner spirit of devotion and the rigorous discipline by which they sought to maintain it. All Christian practices, except those ordained of Christ in the Gospels, were condemned and set aside, lest the inner spirit should be wanting and they should become mere superstitions; and all good works, even works of charity, were held in light esteem, lest they should become substitutes for that inner spirit or hamper the expression of it. To deny the value of good works seems to us a curious way of encouraging the practice of them, and was not always productive of good results. But what Luther meant, and what the more sincere of his followers took him to mean, was that an inner faith is vital, and that from it righteousness should flow as its natural and necessary expression.

§ 5. The remarkable success which attended the Reformation's progress may be cited as bearing out the same thesis. It could never have spread so rapidly or have led to such a gigantic upheaval in spite of the manifold dissensions and differences that it gave rise to, unless it stood for something good, for something that the world was in need of and was anxiously awaiting. The revival of learning and the translation of the Bible into the vernacular doubtless account for the delight people took in forming their own views on religious subjects. The repudiation of Papal claims was doubtless welcomed by those who had become restive and jealous at Papal encroachments and exactions. Luther's new doctrine of Justification by Faith Only, doubtless gained for him many followers who saw in it not an incentive to righteousness, but an excuse for evil deeds and self indulgence. All these causes also were at work and explain why the Reformation became a revolution. But they

do not explain why it was so eagerly welcomed by the people at large, why it secured such a grip, or led to such extraordinary fervour and self-sacrifice. Neither Luther nor Calvin could have established a new religion almost single-handed, unless there had been in that new religion something that appealed to the deeper and more spiritual side of man's nature, something that brought him, or seemed to bring him, nearer to God, something that satisfied the already Christian cravings of his heart, which the religion of his day had aroused, but for the moment was failing to satisfy. That, at any rate, is the Protestant view of the Reformation.

2. *The Success of the Remedy.*

§ 6. That intense faith in Christ's merits and power, from which springs a spirit of prayer, zeal for God's work, and a readiness to suffer in His cause, is the chief legacy which the Reformation is supposed to have bequeathed to succeeding generations. Righteousness, as the reformers conceived it, still flourishes in the Churches which they established, now more so than ever. That inner spirit, which it was their boast to have discovered and laid bare, manifests itself everywhere and in a thousand ways ; at home in Bible reading, family prayer, and simplicity of life ; at church in prayer meetings, revivalism, Christian Endeavours, the work of the Sunday School ; in the world at large in uprightness of life, straightness of dealing, and sound political principles. It is to be found amongst the clergy of these Churches, whom one may chance to meet at conferences or on the battlefield, and it bubbles over amongst their laity, who are ever ready to talk on spiritual subjects. Religious books and periodicals are brimful of it in every page. From it proceeds that zeal for social work and that generosity toward missionary enterprise which the Reformed Churches have displayed during the past century.

The Free Churches claim that they have been particularly conspicuous in all these respects, and not least in the God-fearing character of their pastorate. Born in days when the worship of the Spirit was obscured by formalism, they have ever sought simplicity, earnestness, sincerity, and practical piety. Disgusted with the clergy of Established Churches, many of whom, engrossed in pleasure and worldly pursuits, thought much of their dignity but little of the grace that was in them, they have ever judged their clergy rather by their deeds than their words ; have looked for inspiration, zeal, devotion, rather than for erudition ; have insisted that Christianity should be preached by example as well as by precept ; and have usually found what they sought : a zealous,

hard-working, prayerful, eloquent ministry, whose heart has been in the service of God and whose pride has been rather in their work than in their dignity. There is doubtless another side to the picture, which those without see more plainly than those that are within the Free Churches; but if there be faults, undoubtedly there is also virtue in abundance.

Those then that have sought righteousness on Reformation principles claim to have found what they looked for: whence the inference, judging of religions by their fruits, that the Reformation was justified, and that Protestantism is true.

§ 7. This inference might be valid, had we taken into account *all* the facts, but we have not yet done so. It is admitted that at the outset the Reformation from the point of view of righteousness was by no means a striking success. Luther was a violent man, his mouth ever full of the foulest abuse. His allies amongst the knights and princes would have been a disgrace to a far less noble cause. The immediate outcome of his preaching was the Peasants' revolt. The Zurich reformers, who followed him, were scarcely less harsh, intolerant, and cruel toward their opponents; while the latter, the Anabaptists, were guilty of the gravest excesses and the wildest fanaticism. Calvin's severity was consistent with his doctrine, but hardly consistent with Christian charity or a Christlike humility and meekness. His followers were like-minded with himself. In England the reformers who came from abroad had no axe to grind; but not so Henry, Somerset, Warwick, Elizabeth, who enforced that reform, or the Court party who urged them to it from anything but Christian motives. The result was that in England religion declined, as the Puritans so often pointed out. So also did it decline in Scotland where the 'Lords of the Congregation,' in reforming the Church, so plundered it that but a pittance was left for the reformed clergy. The attempt at a Puritan reformation in Stuart days was inspired by better motives, but the excesses of the Puritan army and the tyranny it established when victorious, were neither better nor worse than the excesses of less pious armies or the tyranny of less religious regimes.

§ 8. Nor is the later history of the Reformed Churches always redolent of righteousness. It is admitted even by Church historians that the result of the Reformation in England was a general relaxation alike of religion and of morals. Church doors were 'closed from Monday to Saturday, the people giving up their daily worship, and coming down to a mere attendance on Sundays and a rare communion made for conformity's sake.'[1] The churches themselves were 'desolate of all cleanliness and meet ornaments';

[1] *A History of the English Church*, vol. v (Frere), p. 130.

'open decays and ruins of coverings, walls, and windows' spoke loudly of the prevailing neglect, and 'unseemly tables with foul cloths' of the absence of all esteem for the sacrament.[1] At Worcester the church plate was being used at home by the married clergy, copes and ornament had been divided up amongst the prebendaries, organ pipes had been made into dishes for their wives, and its case into bedsteads.[2] The Lord Keeper complained to Parliament in 1563 that 'preachers are not diligent, the laity slow to hear and rebellious against authoritative teaching; ministers are few, and many of them are incompetent; discipline is relaxed, so that every man liveth as he will without fear.'[3] The bishops spent much time and heat

> in quarrels among themselves about their dilapidations or with their neighbours about their leases, or with their officers about their jurisdiction. There was a large proportion of the new set of bishops whose administration never rose much above this level, while it readily descended to self-seeking and even dishonesty.[4]

Seminary priests and Puritans alike regarded the religious condition of England in Elizabeth's reign as worse than heathenism; a fact which is not surprising, says Frere,

> when it is borne in mind how rapidly religion had been going from bad to worse, [or how] the sacraments had almost dropped out of sight, the churches were profaned and closed, piety was decayed, and a gloom of spiritual apathy had settled over the land, which was only relieved by the wearisomeness of puritan preachers or the droning of Genevan psalms and mumbling of the homilies.[5]

During the Stuart period there was something of a revival, but there was also much profligacy, for, as Hutton remarks,[6] 'the general relaxation of morals which followed the Reformation had left its disastrous fruits in carelessness and recklessness among all classes.' While after the Restoration and still more so after the Revolution Settlement, matters became as bad as ever, and in some respects worse, for indifference had given place to profanity. Burnet speaks of this period as characterised by 'a disbelief in revealed religion, and a profane mocking at the Christian faith and the mysteries of it.' 'The nation,' he says, 'was falling under a general corruption both as to morals and principles.'[7] In the parish of Epworth, for example, all the people were Anglicans, yet were 'so extreme ignorant that not one in twenty can say the

[1] *A History of the English Church*, vol. v (Frere), p. 68.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 95.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 95.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 191.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 208.
[6] *Ibid.*, vol. vi (Charles I to Anne), p. 119.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 304, 322.

Lord's Prayer right, not one in thirty the Belief,' while in a population of 7000 only 20 were communicants.[1] In the eighteenth century Bishop Secker complains that 'disregard of religion is . . . the distinguishing character of the present age,' that it hath resulted in 'dissoluteness and contempt of principle in the higher part of the world and . . . profligate intemperance and fearlessness of committing crimes in the lower,' and that 'Christianity is now ridiculed and railed at with very little reserve, and the teachers of it without any at all.'[2] What wonder, when the clergy 'were not very distinguishable from the laity of the same social standing except on Sundays. A little less coarse, perhaps, a little more strict in morals, a little better informed. That was all.'[3]

§ 9. The clergy and laity of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, as described by some of their historians, were in pretty much the same state from the time when their struggle with Anglicanism ended right up to the nineteenth century. In the ranks of the Moderates who ruled the Scottish Church at this time, says Berry,[4]

> there was a wide range of character from the good, easy, 'natural' man who performed his routine duties without troubling to ascertain how far his creed and conscience accorded with the standards of the Church, to the genial pagan who did not even feign to believe in Christianity, whose whole life and thought were centred in the things of this world. . . . They were not infrequently elegant scholars, possessing charming manners, and an extensive acquaintance with the whole range of fermented liquors; [but religion they treated as only] 'a phase of philosophical discussion.'[5] 'The Established Church had sunk to the lowest and darkest deeps, and the preaching of the Gospel had all but ceased; a genial, convivial paganism had usurped the authority of the law of Christ.'[6]

Righteousness was somewhat more vigorous in the Free Churches, but even they were largely occupied in quarrels with the Established Church and with one another. Whitefield, who visited them in 1741, thus describes a sermon preached in the Associate Presbytery of Dunfermline:

> The good man so spent himself in the former part of his sermon, in talking against prelacy, the Common Prayer Book, the surplice, the rose in the hat, and such like externals, that when he came to the latter part of his text, to invite poor sinners to Jesus Christ, his breath was so gone that he could scarce be heard.[7]

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[1] *A History of the English Church* (Charles I to Anne), p. 307.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. vii (George I to 1900), p. 121. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 270.
[4] *Scotland's Struggles for Religious Liberty*, p. 48.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 49. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 67. [7] *Ibid.*, pp. 73, 74.

§ 10. These facts also being taken into account, one is forced to admit that the Reformation was not an unqualified success. Its fruits at most were good sometimes, and sometimes were distinctly blemished. Clearly one cannot pronounce judgment without analysis. One must ask whence precisely the good fruits, and whence the corruption and decay. The past history of no Church is particularly edifying if you consider it in a bad period and leave out the relieving features which are usually many. All Churches suffered from the immorality of the sixteenth and the paganism of the eighteenth centuries, and the clergy of all were in part, though only in part, responsible for it through lack of zeal and negligence in correcting abuses. All have also recovered from it, though not without loss of numbers and of grip, a disaster which they are still seeking in vain to remedy to-day. Neither the responsibility for, nor the effects of, this disaster have been the same in all cases and all places. In England it was due far more directly to the Reformation itself than it was in Scotland, and the English Church in consequence has suffered more from the inroads of Erastianism and free thought. But, be they what they may, it may with justice be claimed that there is in all Churches a source of righteousness as well as a source of unrighteousness, and if we would judge of them by their fruits we must discover what those sources are, or we shall judge wrongly, and, it may be, reform the wrong thing.

§ 11. As the spirit of Christ still lived in the Established Churches of England and Scotland during their dark ages, so also it lived in the Church Catholic during hers. That was where the reformers of the sixteenth century made a mistake. They thought that the spark of righteousness was wholly extinct, and it was not. The Church Catholic recovered, though it had sustained in numbers a heavy loss. Those who took part in the counter-reformation were no less devoted to the cause of Christ, no less self-forgetful, no less eager for suffering and martyrdom, than were their opponents, and their lives in many cases were even more remarkable for sterling piety, blameless conduct, and purity of motive. Nay, further, so rapidly did the Church Catholic recover that at the very moment when she was engaged in the most terrific conflict that she had ever had to wage, a conflict that for centuries occupied almost the whole energy of other Churches, she was able to send to China and the Indies missionaries whose burning zeal and remarkable success was second only to that of St. Paul. In all ages the Church Catholic has produced saints, and in all ages amongst her clergy and laity the spirit of true devotion to Christ's person, to His life and passion, to His teaching and ideals, has been alive.

Nowhere will you find a clergy more simple, more devoted, more hard-working, more courageous in time of trial, or more poor, than the clergy of Catholic France at the present day, and nowhere will you find more genuine piety, more real humility, and more abounding charity, than amongst the Catholic laity there as elsewhere. The Catholic Church has never ceased to care for and seek to uplift the poor and the fallen, and they in turn still love her. Her monasteries, convents, confraternities, St. Vincent de Paul societies, social guilds, and a vast variety of other works of charity, are standing witness to her zeal for righteousness and her fidelity to the spirit of her Lord.

§ 12. Again then we must distinguish between the fruits if we would apply Christ's test to the Churches, or, neglecting the bad, and considering only the good, we shall be driven straightway into indifference. All religions contain an element of good, not excluding the religions of Confucius, Buddha, and Mohammed. But, in the concrete, in the people who profess them, they are neither wholly good, nor wholly bad. Their fruits are mixed. Christ apparently did not contemplate mixed fruits when He suggested that we should test prophets by their fruits. In fact, it may be questioned whether He intended this test to be applied to truth at all. He suggested it as a test of *good* and *bad*, not of *true* and *false*, prophets; for a true prophet may be a bad man, as were Balaam and Judas. Strictly speaking, therefore, the test of fruits does not apply to a religion in so far as it claims to be a revelation of truth, but merely to its claim to be of benefit to humanity. In this sense, however, it does apply especially to the Christian religion, for Christianity seeks holiness as well as truth, and uses truth as the means, the chief means in the psychological order, by which holiness is stimulated, encouraged, trained, and perfected.

But Christian creeds are manifold, and consist of many tenets which are different, and sometimes contradictory, in different Churches. Not all these tenets promote righteousness directly, still less equally; and in some cases, since they are diverse, they may not promote it at all. That is another reason why we must analyse the fruits, and try to discover whence proceeds that righteousness which is manifest in all the Churches in different degrees, and whence proceeds the unrighteousness that mars it. If we can solve this problem we shall have solved in part at least the problem of a Catholic-Protestant reunion; for Protestants, forgetful of the unrighteousness that has characterised their own Churches in the past, are staggered by the unrighteousness that at times has been present in the Catholic Church, and, clinging to

the righteousness which they possess, while ignoring its existence elsewhere, are afraid of reunion lest, in becoming Catholic, they should lose it.

3. *The Source of Righteousness in Protestantism.*

§ 13. To what is the righteousness of Protestants due? It cannot be due to their negative tenets, for from negation nothing can evolve. The abolition of indulgences, images, relics, pictures, purgatory, saints, and of the Mother of God, the denial of Transubstantiation, of the Real Presence, and of the Sacrifice of the Mass, was at most a clearing of the way for righteousness, a making straight of the paths of the Lord that He might appear. And it was so regarded by the reformers, though they emphasised this negative element in Protestantism to such an extent that succeeding generations came to regard it as of the very essence of their faith, and have only just awakened to the fact that it isn't. The reformers held that it was necessary to purify the Christian religion of what in their view was a lot of rubbish that had accumulated during the centuries and was clogging the wheels. But it was not from this clearance itself that righteousness was to be born. It was to be born of what was left of the Christian religion when the purification process was completed.

§ 14. Nor does righteousness necessarily appear with freedom, though lack of freedom may have much to do with unrighteousness. Given liberty, Christianity has a chance to develop, and the Holy Ghost to express itself in Christian movements, but it is Christianity and the Holy Ghost, not liberty, that produce the righteousness. Liberty merely gives them a chance. So also with regard to particular forms of liberty, liberty to choose one's own pastors, for instance. Good pastors are not made by the congregations that choose them, but by the inner spirit which the congregation recognises, and which it provides with a field in which to work. Similarly the Free Church principle of testing all applicants for Church membership, so as to exclude the unrighteous, is not the cause of the righteousness of those that are members, though it may give righteousness a chance among them by excluding bad example and an uncongenial atmosphere. Negative doctrines, liberties, Church polities are merely the safeguards, preventatives, helps, by which righteousness is protected and fostered. They do not account for its being.

§ 15. That other striking characteristic of Protestants, their study and love of the Bible, is different, for it is upon this that the positive elements in their religion have been built, and by it that

their character has been formed. The Bible in the days of the Puritans constituted, says Green,

> the whole literature which was practically accessible to ordinary Englishmen. The whole moral effect which is produced nowadays by the religious newspaper, the tract, the essay, the lecture, the missionary report, the sermon, was then produced by the Bible alone. And its effect in this way, however dispassionately we examine it, was simply amazing. The whole temper of the nation was changed. A new conception of life and of man superseded the old. A new moral and religious impulse spread through every class.[1]

The Bible, then, is a positive principle. From start to finish it is a record of a struggle for righteousness, beginning with its creation and man's fall. The Prophets are inspired messengers sent to stimulate it. The Psalms attribute it to its source. The Gospels tell us how Christ preached it to the Jews. The Epistles exhort Christians to follow the new conception of it which Christ brought. Nay, the Bible is more than this, more than mere preacher, teacher, counsellor, exemplar : it tells us whence righteousness may be gained—from Christ, through faith. It was this that Luther taught in his exaggerated doctrine of salvation by faith only, and Calvin, when he emphasised God's power at the expense of man's freedom. It was to cut a way direct to the source of righteousness that all other mediation was removed. To the reformers faith in Christ, whole-hearted, absolute, unquestioning, was all that mattered, and this they learned from the Bible, together with the principles upon which righteousness should be built.

§ 16. Yet the Bible is not a Protestant Book, nor is that faith which the Bible inspires exclusively a Protestant possession. On the contrary, both are Catholic. The Bible was already being translated and read when Protestantism came into being. It was, in fact, the first book to be translated, as soon as the vernacular began to be a literary language as well as the vehicle of ordinary speech ; which indicates the esteem in which it was held, and the importance which was attached to the knowledge of it. Later the propagation and indiscriminate reading of the Bible was not encouraged by the Catholic Church, except in authorised translations, for the simple reason that it was frequently mistranslated, was profusely annotated in a non-Catholic sense, and had come to be one of the main instruments of a Protestant propaganda, which, in the view of those who discouraged and suppressed it, was destructive alike of truth and righteousness and the main source of heresy, schism, and a host of evils and disorders.

[1] *A Short History of the English People*, chap. viii. Sec. 1.

This judgment was not without justification as things then were; and there is undoubtedly a wrong, as well as a right, use to which the Bible may be put. Catholics hold with St. Jerome that 'to be ignorant of the Scripture is not to know Christ,' and that 'a man who is well grounded in the testimonies of Scripture is the bulwark of the Church,'[1] but they do not make Scripture the sole source of their knowledge of Christ's revelation, or its testimonies the sole criterion of Christian truth. Protestants do, substituting the Bible for the voice of the Church. Yet it is the Church which vouches for the Bible, the Church which, collecting various documents together, made of them a Bible, and the Church which guarantees their inspiration. The reformers believed that the Bible was the Word of God simply and solely because the Church had so taught them. It was part of their inheritance, an article of that glorious faith which the Church had preserved and handed down to them. So also was that absolute trust in Christ's merits and power, that sublime belief in Him as the one Divine Mediator, that intense desire to commune with Him, to be sustained by Him, to live and move in His Being, which was to become henceforth, with the Bible, the mainstay of Protestant righteousness.

§ 17. In his 'Outlook for Religion' Dr. Orchard describes heresy as 'simply a bit of the Catholic faith which someone has made the only article of faith in revenge for the Church having forgotten and denied it.' So it is, only it is never the Church that forgets and denies; for, if so, how does that 'bit of Catholic faith' ever come to be known? It is her unworthy members, clerical and lay, sometimes, alas! as numerous as tares in a cornfield, who forget and deny it by their conduct. Had not the reformers been born in the Catholic Church, bred in its faith, inspired by its teachings, they would never have had a Bible, still less have believed in it so firmly as they did. Ultimately, then, the source of Protestant righteousness is Christ, as He was preached, and still is preached, by the Church Catholic. The faith of Protestants, *so far as it goes*, is largely the same as ours, is erected on a basis which the Church approves and uses, and hence leads to the self-same fruits. The positive element in Protestantism, whence righteousness proceeds, is not Protestant, but Catholic.

4. *The Source of Unrighteousness and its Remedy.*

§ 18. Thus far we are agreed; but unfortunately there is in Protestantism a very large element that is purely negative. Its

[1] Cf. the Encyclical of Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus*, usually printed as an Introduction to the Douai version.

righteousness flows not from the whole of Catholic faith, but merely from a portion of it—from the truths that are 'plainly revealed in the Bible,' since these are the only truths that Protestants have retained. Basing their religion on the Bible *only*, they reject numerous Catholic doctrines and practices which to them appear to be either not sanctioned by the Bible or directly repugnant to it.

But this was *not* the reason why they rejected these doctrines and practices in the first instance. They came to regard them as repugnant to Biblical teaching, because they *already* regarded them as the main source of the prevailing unrighteousness. There cannot be the slightest doubt about the fact. The reformers got rid of Catholic doctrines and practices *in the first instance* not because they believed them to be false, but because they considered them to be injurious to righteousness. They did away with indulgences, pardons, pilgrimages, miracle-working images, ceremonies, purgatory, masses for the living and the dead, because they held them to be money-making concerns, devised by a corrupt clergy to fill their pockets, suggesting to the people that salvation could be bought like a piece of merchandise, and used by them in consequence as substitutes for righteousness. They did away with the Pope, and called him anti-Christ, because he was thought to be the arch sinner in this respect, in that it was he who approved these things, he who profited most by them, and he who was the chief obstacle in the way of any and every reform. Belief in the erroneous character of the doctrines that underlay these practices came later, when the reformers proceeded to examine Scripture in the light of these ideas.

§ 19. It is alleged that the reformers were right as to their facts to a very large extent: that there was a tremendous amount of unrighteousness in the Catholic world, especially in Germany and Scotland, and above all in the Papal Court at Rome: that there was also a good deal of formalism and of Christianity sold by the ounce. Indulgences, it is said, were bought cash down, penances commuted for almsgiving, benefices sold to the highest bidder, images, pilgrimages, and Masses a source of much profit to the clergy; while church-going and external rites were for both clergy and laity by no means incompatible with an evil life.

There is an element of truth in these charges; but were this formalism, this hypocrisy, and these simoniacal practices the cause of the unrighteousness, or were they its consequence? Abuses existed in abundance, granted. But were they the outcome of bad doctrine and the cause of bad living, or was there some deeper cause which led alike to bad living and the abuse of good

doctrine? Luther diagnosed the malady of unrighteousness somewhat hurriedly; almost, it would seem, in a fit of passion. He administered a purgative. Others took his diagnosis for granted and increased the dose. Then they gave a stimulant. Might not the stimulant have been sufficient without the purgative, or at any rate without a purgative so violent as to wreck and dismember the system? Now that we are realising the consequences of Luther's action as we never realised it before, there is a growing suspicion that there must have been something wrong both with his diagnosis and his remedy. Let us examine the malady and see.

§ 20. Ecclesiastical unrighteousness did not originate with Christianity, still less with the Christian priesthood; it existed in profusion in the Israelite Church and was the main theme of the prophets' discourses. But the burden of their message was not that 'any religion which begins and ends in ceremonial, or emphasises ritual rather than righteousness, is an immoral and septic religion, a stench in the nostrils of God and a pestilence in the souls of men,' as the Bishop of Carlisle seems to think.[1] The prophets do occasionally speak of the vanity of sacrifice in a people who have forgotten God, of the futility of fasting in which one's own will is found, of sackcloth and ashes which have become a substitute for loosing the bands of wickedness and for undoing the burdens that oppress. They also speak of priests who carry the vessels of the Lord with unclean hands, who offer the blind, the lame, and the sick for sacrifice, or who sacrifice their children to idols and then enter God's sanctuary to profane it; or again of shepherds who feed themselves instead of their flocks, who have no understanding, but have turned aside into their own way, every one after his own gain, from first even to the last. The main object of their denunciation, however, is not formalism and hypocrisy, but sheer apostasy—sacrifices offered to idols, the taking part in pagan rites, fornication, uncleanness, the forsaking of God's Commandments, God's Covenants, and of the Sabbath observance. Hypocrisy, simony, avarice, formalism, are treated as subsidiary evils which result from the apostasy of the heart. And the remedy proposed is not the abolition of sacrifice and ceremonial, but a return to judgment and justice, which shall render sacrifice, oblations, and burnt offerings pleasing in the sight of Him who had commanded and still desired them.

§ 21. The advent of Christianity meant the abrogation of those sacrifices which had merely foreshadowed that of Christ, and could not of themselves 'perfect the conscience'; but it did not mean that the consciences of those who accepted Christ's sacrifice became

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, Feb. 1919, p. 289.

perfect all at once. On the contrary, amongst the early Christians there were frequent scandals, bickerings, jealousy, lawsuits, worldliness, seeking after carnal things, even fornication—in one case such ' as is not known among the heathen.' Ultimate victory was assured to those who sincerely believed, but the perpetual warfare between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman was not ended, and there would still be the bruising of the heel. St. Paul's remedy for the unrighteousness of his day was constant exhortation, a constant setting forth of the ideals, example, promises, merits, and power of Christ, frequent reminders of the consequences and punishment of sin, a salutary use of ecclesiastical discipline, frequent warnings against false prophets (who, like the false prophets of Jeremias' day, were not sent by God and would have torn the Body of Christ asunder), combined with the utmost care in choosing good prophets and rulers for the infant Church, who should teach by example as well as precept.

§ 22. Unrighteousness lived on as the Church grew, though visited with the severest penances, and as Christianity became more popular and more powerful, it increased. There were *traditores*, men who in time of persecution had denied their faith and revealed its secrets. These were the worst of all sinners, for whom many thought repentance impossible. Yet when the Emperor became a convert, half-hearted and worldly Christians became more common still, for Christianity was beginning to pay. Another evil also appeared. Bishops who quarrelled with their neighbours invoked his aid, and thus became in a manner his servants. Their allegiance was becoming divided; patronage arose and free elections began to disappear. The only power that could stay the evil and hold the Emperor in check was the Rock of Peter upon which the Church had been built and against which as yet the waves of Erastianism and heresy dashed themselves in vain.

Unrighteousness thus far, especially amongst the clergy, had been mostly a danger. It became a disaster only when the Roman Empire broke up and the Christian Church took its place as the only power that could resist the barbarian or offer any sort of security in a time of universal disruption and disorder. The Church was the only civilising influence left in Europe. And she won, bringing the forces that were arrayed against her into Christian harness and moulding them on Christian ideals. But the bruise on the heel had almost become a cancer. The Church acquired temporal power. Countless gifts, bequests, and properties were bestowed upon her bishops, her monasteries, her parishes, and her popes in every country in Europe. She needed them, and

used them, as she was intended to use them, in the interests of civilisation. But she suffered for it all the same. As her clergy became more wealthy, prosperous, and powerful, so they became more worldly. Bishoprics, abbacies, priories, and other benefices were well worth having. Consequently many sought them for worldly motives; gained them, or were thrust into them, by influence, bribery, and the power of patronage; and used them only too often, as one would expect such men to use them, not in Christ's interests, but in their own, and in that of their families and friends. The Papacy, enriched by Charlemagne's gifts and now become a principality, was the most attractive bait of all, and for it the noble families of Rome quarrelled and fought to their heart's content. Under such circumstances, slackness among the bishops and heads of religious houses, negligence in the appointment of parish priests, laxity of discipline, and a general decline of religious fervour were only to be expected, though there is another side even to the so-called Dark Ages.

§ 23. Where lay the remedy now, and whence did it come? The reformation that took place in the eleventh century was mainly due to the labours of one man. Hildebrand, diagnosing the situation correctly, set himself to get rid of the chief cause of the evils that had arisen—the control which kings and princes and powerful patrons then exercised over papal, episcopal, and other ecclesiastical appointments. He it was who, before he became Pope, reformed the procedure of papal elections, disfranchising the turbulent Roman nobles and people, for whom were now substituted important Roman ecclesiastics, already known as 'Cardinals.' He it was who, after he became Pope, fought with the temporal power for the right of Investiture, which signified not merely the right to nominate bishops, but also a certain control over them afterwards. He thus purged the Church not of erroneous doctrines, but of worldly and incompetent prelates, and so made possible a revival in which the inborn spirit of righteousness was able once again to come into its own.

§ 24. Hildebrand's vigorous policy was successful. By means of it he purified the Church and restored its apostolic spirit. But he had not got rid of the root cause and motive for the abuses that had so long disgraced it. The Church, as he left it, was richer and more powerful than ever. The emoluments attached to ecclesiastical positions were still a bait for those who sought to acquire wealth and influence. The fact that bishops and abbots were men of vast property, who often became state officials as well as rulers of the Church, still weighed far more with noble and princely patrons than the fact that a bishopric or an abbacy was

a spiritual charge. And, as the sovereign of vast estates and the arbiter of Europe's destinies, it was still of far greater importance in the eyes of royal despots to have a friendly and diplomatic Pope than to have one who was truly a Christian. Consequently, the right to Investiture, lost for the moment to the Church, was soon in practice regained, and the Cardinalate, by means of which Hildebrand had hoped to secure good popes, tended to become instead, as temporal princes got control of it, an instrument for the election of politicians. The cardinal's hat was sometimes bought; sometimes given by popes to their unworthy relations; occasionally it was bestowed upon infants. So political did the cardinals become, and so difficult was it to please everybody, themselves included, that interregnums in the Papacy became of frequent occurrence. Next, the French King, securing a majority, obtained a French Pope, or rather a series of them, who resided at Avignon, and in political affairs were largely subservient to his interests. On their return to Rome, there was a forty years' schism, its origin and duration being alike due to the control which emperors and kings were able to exercise over the appointment and the action of the cardinals. The Papacy had become a prey to conflicting political interests, and though nobody wanted the schism, nobody was willing to sacrifice his own interests for the sake of Christianity's.

Neither did the evil cease with the election of Martin V. The charges that are brought against him and his successors are scarcely less grave than those levelled against his predecessors. The Papacy was still occupied mostly with secular affairs: Rome had to be rebuilt, lawless Italian princes subdued, peace and order restored within the Papal States, and Christian kings and princes somehow induced to sink their differences and unite for the defence of Christendom against the ever-growing peril from the Turk. All this and more the Renaissance popes did to the best of their ability: they encouraged learning, became distinguished humanists, great warriors, noble patrons of literature, painting, and sculpture; they even attempted at the Council of Ferrara-Florence the reunion of East and West. But in strictly spiritual affairs, or in the much-needed reform of the papal court and the hierarchy, they took but little interest. The abuse of political partisanship, of nepotism, of the influence of noble Italian families, the Rovere and the Medici, over papal policy and papal elections, still went on, culminating in the election of that moral Judas of the Papacy, Alexander VI. Meanwhile the hierarchy of the Church, to which appointments were made by self-seeking monarchs and approved by self-seeking popes, was becoming more and more corrupt, the

power of the Church for righteousness was paralysed, and the yearning of her people, ever growing stronger, remained an aching void.

§ 25. Such was the situation, as Protestants depict it,[1] when Luther took it in hand, and applied to it the remedy with which we are all familiar. It was a very different remedy from that which Hildebrand had applied, and produced very different results, for it consisted primarily not in a reform of discipline, but in a reform of faith. There *was* a positive element in the remedy, namely the Bible and the vigorous preaching of simple Biblical truths, such as implicit trust in Christ and absolute faith in the merits of His Redemption; and this positive element, being in reality Catholic, produced sometimes good fruit. There was also, among Zwinglians and Calvinists, and, later on, amongst Presbyterians and Puritans, a vigorous attempt to reform discipline, too. But the essence of the remedy in so far as it was Protestant, and its main feature in the view alike of Luther and of Cranmer, consisted in the denial of Catholic doctrine, first on the ground that it was leading to unrighteousness, and secondly on the ground that it was repugnant to Scripture, the repudiation of doctrine inevitably leading to the repudiation of the Church that taught it.

The Catholic remedy, on the other hand, was Hildebrandine in character. It consisted in that reform of discipline which the Council of Trent enforced, and also in a reform of the papal court; but doctrine remained intact.

5. *The Rival Remedies Compared.*

§ 26. Upon the relative value of the remedies that were applied on the one hand by Luther, and on the other by the Catholic Church herself as a cure for the evils that existed in the sixteenth century, depends the possibility of solving the problem of a Catholic-Protestant reunion. As Catholics, we do not deny that in places serious scandals existed. Nor do we deny that there was urgent need of a reformation. Neither do we repudiate all that the reformers taught—their esteem for the Bible, for instance, or their confidence in God's power. Nor yet again do we assert that the methods of reforming discipline which were adopted by Zwingli and Calvin are hopelessly irreconcilable with Catholic principles. The sole point upon which we are utterly and irredeemably intransigent is the question of faith. There we claim that the

[1] Catholics admit abuses, but deny that they were so widespread or so serious as is commonly asserted. The problem of evil within the Church is discussed from the Catholic point of view in Essay VII.

Protestant remedy was radically wrong. It not only did no good, but it did immeasurable harm. It was discipline, and matters connected with discipline, that were in need of reform, not faith. If Protestants could only be brought to recognise this, and so to set right the fundamental mistake which the reformers made, by restoring the faith that they destroyed, reunion between the Churches that the Reformation tore asunder, would at once come within the bounds of possibility.

§ 27. The reformers assumed, as Protestants sometimes assume to-day, that Catholic doctrine was the source of the unrighteousness which it was their primary aim to get rid of. But was it? Rites and ceremonies were doubtless being abused, as the rites and ceremonies of the Old Law were abused, when God was forgotten but His ritual still observed. Priestly offices and priestly functions were frequently used as a means of getting money, as offices of Church and State may still be used by the less conscientious as means of getting money. In consequence there was a good deal of hypocrisy and formalism, as there must be when men misuse good things, yet pretend that they are using them aright. And this formalism reacted upon the laity, who, seeing that priests cared only for ritual observance or for its pecuniary advantages, almost inevitably came to act as if, by paying alms and fulfilling these observances, they were fulfilling all righteousness. But this was not the doctrine of the Church. Neither was it the doctrine of those who by their action encouraged such practices. They knew that they were doing wrong and made no attempt to justify themselves. They neither taught error, nor did they deny truth. What they did was to stress the less important and leave the more important to take care of itself, which of course in most cases it did not. There is but little trace of false doctrine at the time of the Reformation, whether in the matter of images, relics, pilgrimages, and indulgences, or in the matter of the saints, Our Lady, the Mass, and the Real Presence. There was some exaggeration, and individuals here and there held quaint theories, but the official teaching of the Church, the doctrines of St. Thomas, and the current theology of the schools were perfectly sound. Everybody knew that for a valid confession repentance is necessary, and for a valid indulgence a valid confession. They also knew that priestly absolution and the gaining of indulgences are of no avail unless there be a purpose of amendment, and that walking in processions, the taking of holy water, the wearing of scapulars, the kissing of the toe of St. Peter's statue, as compared with a clean conscience, are small things, and without it are utterly worthless. The fault of the day was not one of doctrine, but of emphasis; and as the

emphasis was on externals, so also was the fault external, so far as faith was concerned. Had it been otherwise, the Church would have spoken up plainly at the Council of Trent, for her doctrine on these subjects is no less clear than it is on any other.

This false emphasis also can be accounted for. It was not so much the cause, as the product of unrighteousness. It was due to the worldliness and evil lives of many of the clergy who were ashamed to preach of righteousness, and to their avarice, which impelled them, in spite of their unworthiness, to continue their priestly ministrations. This avarice and evil living can also be traced farther back to an abuse of patronage on the part of ecclesiastics and laymen who had benefices in their gift, and this again to the wealth and power of the Church which made these benefices worth having. Unrighteousness breeds unrighteousness. Avarice led to pluralities, pluralities to non-residence, non-residence to shepherdless and neglected flocks. Negligent popes led to worldly and indifferent bishops, worldly and indifferent bishops to carelessness in appointing to benefices and in selecting candidates for orders, and the ordaining and appointing to benefices of unworthy candidates to a negligent clergy and the chance of further negligent bishops.

§ 28. All thinking men at the time of the Reformation realised that there was something radically wrong, and most realised what it was that was wrong and where lay the remedy. The cause of unrighteousness in the fifteenth century was the same as it had been in the ninth and tenth centuries, and as Hildebrand had set the matter right then by purifying the Papacy and restoring discipline, so also now, if only the Papal Court could be purged of abuses, and discipline amongst the clergy enforced, righteousness would reassert itself. Once recognise, said Sturmius, a Lutheran, that the Papacy is 'no Lordship, but a cure of souls by which the Pope may rule things in the Church's care to good order, and a great part of the controversy is taken away.' And so it would have been; for it was the 'lordship' element in the temporal sense that was causing most of the trouble, and at the same time was taking up a great part of the Pope's time and energy. The Humanists also realised what was wrong, and wrote scathing criticisms of clerical scandals and incompetence and no less scathing diatribes on the Papacy itself. So, too, did the Emperor and his Court raise their voice against the prevailing lack of discipline and the prevalence of abuses, while the labours of Catholic reformers—Groot and Krebs and Geiler and Capistran—were incessant in the cause of righteousness. Nor were the cardinals behindhand, for amongst them too was a reform party.

§ 29. True, for the moment these counsels prevailed not. Vested interests were so strong, the less spiritual concerns of the Papal Court so numerous and so absorbing, the external condition of the Church in learning, literature, art, building, so prosperous and reassuring, that the popes did not realise the urgent need for immediate action. It was not until the pent-up emotions of many peoples had been set afire by the spark that Luther kindled that the Pope took cognizance of their desires; and then it was too late to prevent schism, for already vast multitudes had broken away from the Rock which should have been their main support in discipline as well as in faith, and, seeking reform on other lines, remedied discipline on their own account and transformed faith together with it.

The Catholic Reformation, when it did arrive, however, took precisely the form that had been suggested on all hands, by the Emperor and by the Humanists, and by many Protestant as well as by Catholic reformers. A council was summoned which, in addition to dealing with questions of faith, now become of primary importance, made a thorough and radical reform of Church discipline. The ordination of candidates at too young an age was forbidden, and a careful inquiry as to their morals and capacity prescribed. Pluralities, non-residence, the sale and exchanging of benefices, and other abuses of a like kind were strictly probibited. Religious orders were reduced in numbers and the observance of their rules required of all. Numerous indulgences were suppressed, and quasi-simoniacal practices that had grown up in connection with them were abolished. Confessional privileges and exemptions were also reduced and regulated. In short the Papacy, approving the Acts of the Council, reformed both itself and the discipline of the whole Church for which it was responsible, and thus, without altering faith, gave it a chance to express itself by providing the Church with a clergy who should practise as well as preach, and preach the whole of Christianity, not merely a part of it.

No one denies that the results of this Catholic Reformation were both beneficial and far-reaching. And the very fact that such a reformation should have been possible is in itself evidence that the Church cannot have been so corrupt as her enemies alleged. The practice of Christianity had by no means ceased within her. It had merely declined in certain places, of which the Papal Court unfortunately was one. There were good priests as well as bad, zealous bishops as well as time-servers, monasteries of strict observance as well as monasteries that were lax. There was also a vast amount of genuine spirituality. Indeed, that very age which preceded the Reformation and is supposed to have been

so wholly unspiritual, is the age that produced that most spiritual of all books after the Bible—the 'Imitation of Christ.' Had spirituality been nowhere taught, nowhere practised, nowhere loved, there would neither have been a Catholic nor a Protestant Reformation. Most of the reformers were priests and monks, and all were born in the faith. So also were the teeming multitudes who so eagerly embraced their doctrines, and on behalf of them, fought and died and persecuted and suffered persecution. Protestantism did not convert men to belief in Christ. At most, it merely persuaded those who already believed to live according to their belief. Faith was there already, and it was an intense faith, otherwise it would never have given rise to that extraordinary outburst of enthusiasm and endurance, which characterised both sides in that terrible conflict. So also was spirituality esteemed, otherwise men would never have sought it, still less have attained it, as they did.

§ 30. Unfortunately the attention of the reformers was so concentrated on the evils of the age in which they lived, that they overlooked entirely its good qualities—a fault in which many modern critics have imitated them. They blamed faith for the fact that its precepts were neglected, and so abolished, together with the abuse of them, the doctrines that were being abused. In this they were far less clear sighted than their predecessors had been. For, though Wyclif and Hus also attacked faith, they rightly judged that wealth and lax discipline were the chief causes of decadence, and concentrated their main attack here. They questioned the value of sacraments, but only when administered by clergy whose lives were evil. They criticised popes and bishops and questioned their authority, but chiefly where that authority was misused. They would have confiscated the wealth of the Church, but would have done so chiefly because it was the mainstay of clerical abuses. Had the Council of Constance, instead of merely condemning their errors, succeeded in redressing also the grievances against which Wyclif and Hus and John of Prague so vigorously protested, it is possible that their errors would have died a natural death instead of reproducing themselves in a still more exaggerated form in the doctrines of the Protestant Reformation.

§ 31. The consequences of the Protestant Reformation afford us a still more striking proof of the fact that it was discipline, not faith, that needed reforming. The Lutheran Reformation, and those that were based on this model, consisted exclusively in the emphasising of Luther's favourite doctrines of 'Justification by Faith Only' and of 'Faith revealed only through the Bible,'

and in the consequent rejection of all Catholic doctrine and ritual that seemed to be incompatible with this principle. The Zurich and Genevan reformers, on the other hand, reformed discipline as well as faith, and regarded the reform of discipline as at least as vital, if not more vital, than the change of faith. And they were right; for whereas from a change of faith in a negative direction, nothing positive could ensue, the enforcing of strict discipline was certain to produce positive and practical results. The difference in these two types of reformation, therefore, could not but be radical and far-reaching. Wherever the Zurich and Genevan principles were adopted—in Switzerland, France, some parts of Germany and the Low Countries, and later, in a modified form, among the Free Churches of England—the reformation that ensued was comparatively a success. In the greater part of Germany and in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, where Lutheran principles were adopted, and the essence of the reformation lay in a change of faith and ritual enforced by the State, it was, on the other hand, a manifest failure: righteousness neither flourished nor endured.

§ 32. A still more striking example of the different effects of these two principles is afforded by the Reformation in England. Cranmer, following in Luther's wake, brought about by the aid of State Supremacy a reform of doctrine and ritual, but left Church discipline untouched. The old abuses which had done so much harm in Germany, but which in England, if Sir Thomas More's judgment be correct, were not as yet a serious difficulty, were allowed to remain. Pluralities, non-residence, the sale of benefices, the appointment of laymen and even minors to ecclesiastical preferment, corrupt officials, criminous clerks, simony, the abuse of church courts, dumb ministers, bishops and clerics who had sought and obtained office for the sake of its emoluments, the abuse of lay patronage and of State control and interference—all these evils, instead of diminishing, grew and multiplied. It was the acceptance of the Prayer Book and uniformity of ceremonial and dress that the Government and the bishops most cared about. The result was not only that righteousness steadily declined, but that the remnant of faith which the Prayer Book and Articles had retained, became shattered and diversified amongst the clergy, while in the hearts of the multitude it gave place to profanity and unbelief. A further reformation became inevitable, and as it could not be obtained from within, it came, as in Scotland, by way of schism. The Church of England, from the day that Cranmer reformed it, to the beginning of the nineteenth century when it was again reformed by inheritors of Wesley's

traditions, was a standing witness alike to the correctness of the Catholic diagnosis of the cause of unrighteousness and to the futility of the distinctively Protestant method of restoring righteousness by the denial of Catholic doctrine. The Protestant reformers not only did not attain righteousness by this means, but in Cranmer's case, and to some extent at least in the case of the Church of Scotland, they did not attain it at all, for the simple reason that they attributed unrighteousness to the wrong cause, and so reformed the wrong thing.

§ 33. In brief, then, the history of the Jewish Church, of the early Christian Church, and of the decadence of the ninth and tenth and again of the fifteenth centuries alike show that the source of unrighteousness is not false doctrine, but greed of wealth and power leading to abuses of patronage, to the interference of civil potentates and powers, and hence to lax discipline and innumerable clerical abuses. Hence the Catholic Reformation, which took cognisance of this fact, succeeded. So also did the Protestant Reformation in so far as it also reformed discipline. But where faith only was reformed, it was a disaster, and a second reformation became necessary. In each case, therefore, where a reformation has succeeded, the key to its success has lain in the abolition of abuses, and the restoration of discipline, the chief aim of which, whether exercised by popes and bishops or by church courts and synods, is to keep out unworthy ministers, to correct what is wrong in those that are already ministers, and to ensure that the work of their ministry is duly and conscientiously performed. Righteousness is not *produced* by these means. Discipline and polity, which exists for the sake of discipline, serve merely to keep the channels of righteousness clear. The positive principle from which righteousness proceeds, is the truth which Christ has revealed and which we make our own through faith. But the channels through which truth comes, and with it righteousness, *must* be kept clear. Hence in all Churches, though their polity now varies almost as much as faith, it is none the less by faith that righteousness is sustained, and by polity through discipline that the evils that would destroy faith and hamper righteousness are overcome. There lies the clue to reunion. Polity, except where faith is involved, is of small consequence, provided always discipline is maintained; but faith is of vital consequence, both because Christ has revealed it and because from it flows righteousness. The reformers, having diagnosed the cause of the malady of unrighteousness incorrectly, reformed faith by mistake. That mistake must be corrected, that so faith, and through it righteousness, may again become whole.

6. *Consequences of the Negative Element in Protestantism.*

§ 34. If the negative element in Protestantism be really error, and therefore evil, it should have produced evil results. The chief of these is obviously diversity and schism, but there are others which more directly pertain to the present discussion, since they concern Christianity as a means of producing righteousness in the world. Protestant Churches have *not* profited by the cutting away of Catholic doctrines and practices. On the contrary, there is something lacking to them of which they are ever becoming more painfully aware. They complain that their congregations are falling off and are not being replaced. They are conscious of a loss at once of the power to retain and of the power to attract. The Free Churches preach personal devotion to the Master and personal confidence in His power. They seek to bring home to their congregations that Christ is their only hope, and that their one aim in life should be to serve Him, to obey Him, and to further His will. The ideal of an earnest Free Churchman, in fact, is summed up in that invigorating word 'Christian Endeavour.' But however sublime the ideal may be, and however powerfully it may appeal to those who already know Christ and are religiously inclined, experience has shown that it does not succeed with all classes of men. Its power is felt chiefly by those who are naturally good of heart and so are not exposed to those gross and violent temptations with which other men may be beset. But men who are naturally good have little sympathy with others less spiritually or less morally inclined. Nor have the Free Churches the same means of helping the sinful and the fallen as Catholics have, for their religion is practically devoid of sacraments. They may preach of Christ's power, but they can give no tangible evidence of that power. They are asked for a sign, and no sign is available, except an appeal to their own experience, which can have little weight with those who do not possess it.

There are also the proud to be converted, men who will not bow the head except to power which they recognise as vastly superior to their own. What evidence have the Free Churches of a power such as this? They date back at most to the sixteenth century; were founded and formed by human agencies; appeal exclusively to Englishmen or Scotsmen, nay, to Englishmen and Scotsmen of a particular class. They have no art, but little literature, and a past that is both short and full of quarrels. From the Church of the ages they seem to be cut off by a yawning and unbridgable gulf.

Again there are busy business men, harassed by difficulties, tempted by the desire of gain, absorbed in a multitude of affairs. What have the Free Churches to offer them? Their chief attraction is the eloquence of their preachers; but, unfortunately, all preachers are not eloquent. Neither do all men find rest in listening to sermons. And it is rest, tranquillity, a consoling, yet elevating and healing peace that our busy world now seeks. The Quakers supply this by a prayer of silence, but this again appeals only to a certain type of mind. The attention of most men is inclined to wander. They want something to draw it back, something that in its silence is attractive and appealing, something they can contemplate and listen to, and from it at the same time draw fruit,—a picture, for instance, or beautiful music, or an act that is done by another, but in which they can silently take part.

§ 35. Then again there are the lower classes and the really poor. They also have to be attracted and won over from worldliness and sin. Some are attracted most easily by sound common sense, or again by an appeal to their emotions, in which common sense is blended. Yet in neither respect is the religion of Protestants particularly conspicuous. Men have a habit of asking awkward questions, especially about Scripture, and it is not easy to answer them if Scripture be your final rule of faith. Nor are revivals so potent as they were. The disappearance of the doctrine of hell has robbed them of one half of their power, and the abnormal phenomena which used to make them interesting and attractive, have come to be regarded by most Churches as of very little worth. Moreover, the effects of a revival are apt to wear off, and the Free Churches have no permanent attraction by which to replace it. The abolition of bare walls, the restoration of the organ, and the beautifying of some of their chapels has done a little to take off the severity which Puritanism introduced, but as yet it has not gone very far, and has hardly touched worship at all. Men grow weary of perpetual hymn-singing and sermons, and of listening to other people's prayers. The P.S.A. has introduced a non-religious element, a fiddle and a solo, which would have shocked the old Puritans worse even than an organ or a stained-glass window; but it has not supplied the want. What men ask is that religion itself should be attractive, nay, further, that the very building should have power. That element in Nonconformity is entirely wanting. Who would ever dream of going to a dissenting chapel to seek God's presence or to say a private prayer?

§ 36. All that is lacking in Protestantism the Catholic Church possesses, for by her reformation was destroyed neither ritual nor faith. There is offered daily on her altars a perpetual sacrifice,

the same that Christ offered on the Cross; and in it all Christians can participate. It is theirs. They will find it wheresoever they happen to be. And it is the same everywhere in spite of difference of language or rite, and can be understood everywhere, even by the most ignorant. For a sacrifice is more than mere words: it is an act, a drama; yet a drama which has meaning and power. In it each person present may share as devotion moves him, silently or otherwise, for the Victim that lies on the altar is offered for him and is his to offer. He may partake of It also if his heart be clean, as often as he wills. The Victim, which is Christ our Lord, dwells with him too, when the Mass is over. He is there in the tabernacle, awaiting his visits, ever ready to commune with and bless him. A Catholic church is never empty, no matter how poor. For the Master Himself is there under the sacramental species, and, so believing, the church becomes for us in very truth God's house, our spiritual home.

§ 37. Then there are the sacraments, not two only but seven, one for each phase of our spiritual life, one for each of our needs. The first, a sacrament of initiation and life-giving grace, that makes of us, even in infancy, children of God and members of Christ's body, the Church. Another strengthens us at the moment when intelligence dawns, passions awaken, and life's battle begins. Another feeds us, daily if we wish and are able, with that spiritual bread for which daily we pray, as Christ taught us, with the bread which is His own Flesh and Blood, whereby we have life and a pledge of our resurrection. Another helps us, should we fall, assuring us of God's forgiveness if we truly repent, and giving us grace to amend. Others await us when we choose a state of life. One sanctifies marriage, and gives to those whom God joins together, grace to live with one mind and heart, a sacrament that is surely needed in these days of frequent divorce. Another gives to the sons of men, called specially to God's service, the power to offer His Body and Blood in sacrifice and the power to forgive sin. The last is for the sick and dying, a source whence health may come, or, in case of fatal sickness, a source of consolation, cleansing their souls and preparing them for the journey which all some day must make.

In the power of these sacraments and in their value for practical life, Catholics have a firm belief. Protestants, on the other hand, while professing to believe in the principle of sacraments, display in practice but little confidence in their sacramental power. The chief instruments which make for righteousness in the Protestant view are the Bible, preaching, and prayer. Instruments of this kind work consciously by way of motive or effort, and produce

fruits which can be experienced and valued. Of the working of sacraments, on the other hand, one is not directly conscious, nor is one conscious necessarily of immediate fruit. Hence by Protestants, inclined to be sceptical where experience is lacking, they are but little esteemed. As symbolic of cleansing or feeding, it is admitted that they are suggestive and helpful, and hence may be said to confer grace, but of belief in any efficacy over and above this there is in Protestantism very little trace. Yet God is not bound to use psychological instruments in conferring grace. He may operate through physical instruments, if He chooses. He did so when the woman touched the hem of His garment, and again when He made clay and placed it on the blind man's eyes. Or He may use no instruments at all.

As a matter of fact, we are never conscious of the operation of grace itself, as distinct from the instrument, psychological or sacramental, through which it works; nor, apart from faith, can we distinguish its effects from the effects of revealed truth apprehended by us and operating in our hearts. We believe grace to be more than conscious impulse or psychological motive. We acknowledge it as the gift of God, whereby we are sanctified and rendered capable of living a life such as without grace would be impossible. But we believe this only because God has revealed it and Scripture so teaches. Similarly, as Catholics, we believe that sacraments have power, not because we can verify that fact in experience, which at best in such matters is an ambiguous witness, but because Scripture speaks of that power, and the Church affirms its existence. Yet experience does confirm our belief, as any practising Catholic would testify, and the righteousness that comes through sacraments is not quite the same as that which comes through more conscious channels. It is more humble, less self-conscious; more trustful, less self-righteous. Man's nature craves for a sign, not necessarily a proof, but just a sign or token; and God has given him that sign. Grace is invisible, but he knows that God has given it, and when. God's promise is given, and so long as man fulfils his part, God's part also will be fulfilled. Such is Catholic belief, and it is certainly humble, trustful, and productive in practical experience of abundant and inestimable fruit.

§ 38. Other Catholic doctrines, and the practices in which they express themselves, are also productive of much fruit. The love of the Virgin Mother of our Lord—our Mother, since we are His brethren—and reverence for God's holy servants makes a vast difference to our spiritual life and outlook. They are dead, but they do not help us merely by their example, for they have not

gone from us altogether. They know us and we know them. They are God's friends and ours also. They can hear and intercede for us, helping us by their action and prayers. So also have we communion with the souls of those of whose sanctity we are not so sure. They had served God indifferently perhaps: the sanctity that should have been theirs, they did not acquire. Yet they repented, was it only at the last moment, like the good thief; and their sin was forgiven. Its consequences are even now being purged away, and we can help them by praying for them, and uniting our sufferings with theirs, as they also by prayer can help us. What a consolation that doctrine is to anguished souls; what confidence it gives them; what excesses it saves them from, so common in these days of psychical research, yet so often deceitful and dangerous alike to peace of soul and to morals!

§ 39. Belief in the value of Symbolism is perhaps the least important of all Catholic beliefs; yet that also is helpful beyond measure, and is intimately bound up with the worship of all the ancient Churches. One worships not by word only, but by act. The Mass is a sacrificial act. Its ceremonies are not only relics of the past; they also have meaning. The altars on which Mass is said are made as beautiful as possible. So also is the House in which God dwells. We beautify our homes; why should we not beautify our churches? Is not beauty of God? His is a curious mentality that is not moved to devotion by a beautiful church or inspired by a beautiful picture. And still more curious is the mentality of those who will make use of pictures in children's books of Bible history, but will not permit them in the place where the Bible is preached. Ritual, ceremonial, music, painting, architecture are but auxiliaries to the worship of God. But they impart to it a richness, a beauty, a warmth, a significance, without which it could not make itself, as Paul did, all things to all men. Symbolism is not of faith; but to deny its value would be contrary to the spirit of faith.

§ 40. Such is the practical significance and value of the ancient faith that Protestants have lost. Such is its spirit, as those conceive it who still possess it. They cannot, dare not, sacrifice it, because they believe it to be an integral part of Christ's revelation. But experience has shown that it also has immense value for that very righteousness which Protestants seek, and this value is now becoming recognised more and more widely. Consequently Catholic faith and practice is now being revived. First symbolism, then ritualism, then genuine Catholic doctrine and practice. First in the Anglican Church, and now in the Free Catholicism which has sprung up amongst the Nonconformists. As Cranmer sought

to destroy Catholic faith by introducing a Protestant *Lex Orandi*, so now would-be Catholics are introducing Catholic practice in the hope of restoring the faith that it should imply. Empty as this practice may be without valid orders and the Apostolic Succession, it has great instructive value, and, supplemented by verbal instruction, will inevitably re-awaken that faith which the Reformation destroyed. Supplemented by preaching, it will thus remove the chief, and only insuperable, obstacle to a Catholic reunion, for granted that faith be the same, the essential condition, recognised by all as vital to reunion, will be realised.

7. *Subordinate Issues.*

§ 41. Once the faith that the Reformation destroyed is restored, other difficulties, however deeply they may be felt, should speedily adjust themselves. Upon them, therefore, we shall touch only briefly, and mainly with a view to showing that they are not, from the point of view of righteousness, of serious importance. Wealth is one, for wealth, as we have seen, has been all along one of the chief incentives to unrighteousness. The difficulty is an old one. It occurred in the case of Judas and the rich young man. It is also a perpetual one, and is felt in all religions, non-Christian as well as Christian, ancient as well as modern. Neither can it be got rid of entirely, since every Church needs wealth, and wealth in abundance, if it is to carry on its work, especially a Church which believes in consecrating beauty in the shape of beautiful churches, altars, ornaments, vestments, to the service of God and to the instruction and elevation of the human mind.

Wealth, however, in itself is not evil, but good. Hence the problem is not how to get rid of it, but how to prevent its abuse. No one appreciated the evils of his day and their significance more than did St. Ignatius Loyola. For that reason he enjoined upon his subjects no personal wealth, no administration or handling of wealth, no seeking after or accepting of ecclesiastical preferment, no saying of Masses for alms, and, in the case of professed houses, no endowment. But to apply such a remedy universally is impossible. Wealth, being in itself a good thing and even a necessity, the renunciation of it by individuals must be voluntary, as it was in the Apostolic Church and always has been in the case of those who choose to join a religious order. Yet the general principle involved may still be applicable. What belongs to a religious, belongs to the order, not to the individual; and similarly with regard to the possessions of the Church. Nay, further, all that is given by the faithful for the service of God, should come

back to them in some form or other, either in services rendered to them or to others, or in churches and schools erected, or in charitable works undertaken ; in which matter the old rule, though not always kept, was a good one ; one third to the fabric, a second to the pastor, and the rest to God's poor. No one, in fact, questions that property should belong to the Church as a whole and not to individuals within it, and should be used for the purposes for which it is given. Hence the disposal of it should be safeguarded by discipline and law, whether administered by a hierarchy, or by a synod of clergy and laymen. The latter method is more popular in these democratic days, and is by no means uncatholic. No question of ' right ' is involved, however, so long as wealth is used for the purposes for which it was given ; so that the problem is practical, not theoretical, and reduces itself to discovering the best means under present circumstances of attaining an end which all are agreed upon.

§ 42. Interference in politics also is an abuse which has done harm rather through the fault of individuals than through that of the Church as a whole ; and under present circumstances it would seem to be evident that the less any Church or any clergyman has to do with politics, the better for religion. Yet it is manifestly impossible to separate the spheres of politics and religion entirely, and no Church has taken more interest or displayed more energy in the matter of politics than have the Free Churches of England. One of them even had a schism over the Reform Bill. Yet Reform Bills are only loosely connected with religion. Education, on the other hand, and the obligation of civil law in conscience, are bound up with it. On certain matters, therefore, the Church has not only the right but the duty of speaking out. This is clearly recognised. In fact one of the reasons why reunion is so imperative is that the Christian Church may regain an influence with the State which would enable her ' to promote the application of Christian principles to human life in all its relationships.' It is to the purpose and manner in which political influence has been used in the past, especially by mediæval popes, cardinals, and bishops, that objection is taken. There *was* doubtless good ground for that objection at times ; but the Pope has long ceased to be a temporal sovereign, and with the disappearance of the motive for it, has disappeared also intrigue. On the other hand, a man does not lose his rights as a citizen by becoming a cleric, though it may be advisable for him to waive those rights for the sake of a higher end, to which his priesthood calls him. Hence in this matter individuals may fail, and even groups of individuals ; for the line between politics and religion, between the State's

interests and Christ's, is not easy to draw. But, as a whole and in its head, the Church keeps clear of politics and is content to outline their bearing on Christian principles and to exhort men to follow Christ's teaching.

§ 43. Another difficulty that is keenly felt is that the Church is conservative, and is supposed to be the enemy of liberty. In days gone by, when the whole world was ruled by autocrats and liberty was almost unknown, the Church was the most democratic of institutions and the foremost champion of liberty. Now, when the whole world is embracing democracy and liberty is won, she is said to have been left behind and to be the mainstay of reactionary forces. She certainly is conservative, as she must be, having something to conserve of inestimable value; but of reaction there is no sign. She sees the evils in democracy, as she saw them in autocracy, and points them out; but she is no less strenuous in her condemnation of the abuse of capitalism, of the exploitation of labour, and of the evils of militarism, than she is in condemning license, or in supporting the rights of private property justly acquired.

It is, however, rather to her constitution than to her public action that exception is taken; for though her clergy, hierarchy, and her popes are drawn from every class, they are not elected by the people, and together form a closed body, in whose synods the laity have no voice. That is true, but it is often forgotten that the reason why her clergy are no longer elected, is that their election by people, who voted not as they willed but as their landlords dictated, had become an intolerable abuse, and that the laity lost their voice in synods largely because of their negligence and incompetence in using it. Conditions to-day are not the same, but there is still an element of danger. Should the right of patronage, together with the power it entails, be conferred upon congregations, abuses might crop up. For congregations composed of nominal Christians may become as self-seeking and as worldly as landlords, and to draw a distinction between those who practise and those who don't, is both dangerous and invidious. The Free Church system is by no means free from blemishes. If the clergy are to preach Christ's gospel without respect for men, they must be independent. If elected and paid by their congregation, they tend to become its servants, subservient to its wishes and afraid to reprove for fear of giving offence. One can hardly imagine the congregation at Corinth being allowed to dictate to St. Paul. The clergy have a special function in the Church—to guard the faith, and to preach it, to lead in worship, and to administer the sacraments; and for that they receive from God a special charisma

or grace. That charisma or grace must have free scope to express itself, otherwise the channels through which flow faith and grace unto righteousness, will become blocked, with consequences that can only be disastrous. Again, it is merely a question of adjustment. The clergy must have free scope for the legitimate exercise of their proper functions, while the laity, in whom also the Spirit of Truth lives, must be provided with adequate means for expressing their desires and their views.

§ 44. Such problems, all of them connected with polity, loom large in the discussion between Anglicans and Free Churchmen, but in the problem of a Catholic-Protestant reunion they are, as compared with faith, of quite secondary importance. If only the faith problem could be solved, and all would remember that this or that feature of Church polity or discipline or policy is but a means to an end which we are all agreed upon, a way out would surely be found. No Protestant now maintains that episcopacy is repugnant to Scripture; and, though many still think that a non-episcopal, or an episcopal but non-papal, polity is the best, none can claim, in the face of overwhelming historical evidence to the contrary, that either an episcopal, an hierarchical, or a papal polity is incompatible with righteousness, or is incompetent to serve as an instrument whereby it may be fostered. This means that from the point of view of righteousness Protestants are prepared to discuss polity as an open question. It remains, therefore, only that the other aspect of episcopacy should become more clear, namely its relation to sacraments and to faith. For to Catholics in this respect episcopacy is vital, since they regard it, now as ever, as the divinely appointed instrument whereby faith is preserved and the power to administer sacraments conveyed through the operation of the Holy Ghost.

§ 45. Viewed, then, from the point of view of righteousness and in the light of what happened at the Reformation, the problem of a Catholic-Protestant reunion is not insoluble. Neither is it hopeless, seeing that the attitude of Protestants toward the Reformation and its consequences is very different from what it was a hundred years ago. We now know that, though the reformers got hold of an extremely important Christian truth which their own generation seemed to hold in but little esteem, they did not discover that truth, as they thought; but learnt it, together with their reverence for the Bible, from the Church Catholic, which still taught it, as she had ever done. That truth, the immediate dependence and direct relationship of the soul to its Maker and its redemption by the shedding of Christ's Blood, is of the essence alike of the Protestant and of the Catholic religions, and was just

as vital to St. Dominic, St. Francis, St. Ignatius, and St. Theresa as it was to Luther, Calvin, and John Knox. Protestants still hold it; and in that, and in all other of their positive tenets, they have essentially Catholic faith. But they have not the whole of Catholic faith. Whether inspired by good motives or by bad, the reformers tore away much that they said was useless, and, because the Church resisted them, broke away. There they made a mistake, for the doctrines and practices which they got rid of, were not the cause of unrighteousness; neither did they restore righteousness, or even help to restore it, by this negative means. They restored righteousness, if at all, by means of a vigorous discipline which enabled faith to express itself; and so did the Catholic Church; but the two faiths, alas, were no longer the same! From that disaster Protestantism has recovered neither in unity, nor in power, nor in the breadth of its spiritual life, nor in the largeness of its appeal, in spite of the tremendous vigour which it has thrown into Christian work both at home and in the mission field. It lacks something, and that something is that portion of Christian faith of which the reformers robbed it through excessive zeal. It is struggling to get it back, for it realises now that something is wanting; and it will succeed. When that day dawns reunion will be as good as accomplished, for there is no other difficulty that cannot be overcome by the spirit of fellowship, by sound common sense, by honesty of purpose, and by a recognition of the end for which Christ came on earth, for which faith was given, and for which the Church exists.

ESSAY VI

THE ROOT OF DIVERSITY

'And hardly do we guess aright all things that are upon earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us. But the things that are in heaven, who shall search out? And who shall know Thy thought except Thou give wisdom and send Thy Holy Spirit from above?'—WISDOM ix. 16–17.

1. *Diagnosis of the Malady.*

§ 1. The prolific nature of the Sectarian principle—whatever that principle may be—is one of the most extraordinary and certainly the most unlovely characteristic of Protestantism. It is a principle that Protestants themselves sincerely deplore and are earnestly seeking to remedy; and it is a principle that is peculiar to Protestantism. There had been heresies before, some of which in name still endure; but none of them have led to a diversity comparable in the least degree to that of Protestant sects. Schism also has produced diversity; but, though there are sixteen Orthodox bodies, all more or less independent, they, at any rate, have the same faith and worship and are in communion one with the other. Protestantism, on the other hand, has led to a perfectly amazing number of Churches and sects. True, only some of these are of any considerable size, a dozen perhaps. Still a dozen is a dozen, and though that dozen now differ but little in fundamental faith, they used to differ considerably, and still differ in opinion about faith. In fact it would be difficult to find among Protestants not merely two Churches that have the same views, but even two Christians, so diverse has faith, yea, even fundamental faith, become.

Whatever good fruit Protestants may attribute to the Reformation, however much they may esteem its ideals, it is impossible to deny that in one respect it has signally failed. Its faith, instead of growing, has propagated itself like an amœba by dividing and dividing again until in some cases there is hardly any faith left at all.

Realising the disaster that has overtaken them, Protestants would gladly put it right if they could. They do not like diversity: it destroys Christ's ideal; and they still esteem that faith which the vagaries of Modernism are rapidly undermining. But where does the remedy lie?

§ 2. Surely if we wish to find an efficient remedy, we must first seek the cause of the disease. Why did Protestantism become diverse? Those who first preached Protestantism did not intend it to become diverse. On the contrary, they hated diversity, and, like their contemporaries, regarded it as a sin, which they sought to cure by persecution. Some people now say that diversity is essential to righteousness; but the reformers did not so regard it. On the contrary, they held that righteousness could only come through truth, which for them, as for the rest of the world, was to be one and undivided. Error doubtless was mingled with truth in much that they taught, must have been, is admitted to have been; but it was truth that they claimed to be seeking, and truth that was set forth to their disciples as the Reformation's chief attraction. Garbed in new garbs that were not free from error, and accompanied by much denunciation of what after all may have been true, the new gospel rapidly led to diversity; but it was not its diversity that drew men: it was the truth that underlay diversity—old truth, Catholic truth, the truth of God's love for man and Christ's work for man's redemption. And that truth is one, just as much one for Luther and Calvin and Cranmer as it was for Paul or Peter or John. Protestantism does not differ from Catholicism in its conception of the nature and origin of Christian truth. Both acknowledge a revelation made by God through Jesus Christ, which must be accepted in its entirety on Christ's word, since He alone of mortals has had direct experience of God—has known God because He is God—and therefore knows the truth about God, and what He does for and asks of man. Whatever He has revealed, that we must believe. To deny that revelation is to deny Christ, and to alter it is to become a false Christ. Both propositions are equally vital, and were regarded by the reformers as equally vital. They were not anarchists, nor did they conceive themselves as revolutionaries. They did not seek to destroy faith, but merely to clear it of encumbrances. And that faith, when cleared of encumbrances, ought to have been the same for all.

Yet, as a matter of fact, faith never has been the same for all Protestants. In a certain sense different faiths are becoming more alike, for differences are dropping away; but in another sense they are becoming more unlike, for fresh differences are ever arising, and those of more vital importance than the old ones.

There must be something wrong somewhere or this diversity would never have arisen, and that something must *still* be wrong or diversity would not continue to throw out new branches. And that something that is wrong must be wrong with *all* Protestant Churches. But what is it?

§ 3. The essence of Protestantism as a principle of righteousness is, as we have seen, both positive and Catholic; but its essence, as distinct from and opposed to Catholicism, is definitely and radically negative, negative from start to finish. This may not seem to be so at first sight, for there are Protestant beliefs, apparently positive, which seem to be incompatible with positive Catholic beliefs. But this is not really the case either in regard to the distinctive beliefs of Luther and Calvin, now for the most part discarded, or in regard to present Protestant beliefs. They are incompatible, because the Protestant belief contains an element which is the negation of Catholic belief.

Luther said that man was justified by faith in Christ's redemption, 'faith' involving for him both belief and confidence; and so he is, but not by that *only*. Faith must express itself in works. Calvin insisted that God's power is irresistible and that He alone is the cause of salvation; both of which propositions are strictly true. But God does not exert that irresistible power as against man's freedom. He offers the grace of salvation which man may accept or refuse. Calvin preached God's omnipotence, but denied man's free will.

So also with regard to the Reformation doctrines that have survived. Catholics hold that Baptism is a sacrament in which the soul is actually cleansed from sin; Protestants regard Baptism as symbolic of the washing away of sin; which it is, but not *merely*: it also has efficacy to wash away sin. For Nonconformists the Eucharist is *merely* a service commemorative of the death of our Lord, and the reception of it an act which promotes fellowship with Him *merely* by symbolising it and reminding us of its importance. For Anglicans it is a sacrament, properly so-called. For those who regard it in the light of the First Prayer Book and of one or two prayers in the Second, it is also a commemorative offering of praise and thanksgiving. But except to those who now possess a faith which goes beyond the Prayer Book and often discards it, it is *not* the sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood. For Catholics also the Eucharist is a commemorative service, a true sacrament, an oblation of praise and thanksgiving which we offer to God, but it is something else besides: it is one and the same sacrifice with that which was offered on the Cross, and being one and the same, though offered successively in time, is propitiatory and truly

meritorious. It does not add to the sufficiency of the merits of the sacrifice of the Cross, but it possesses them, because Christ's Body and Blood are really present and really offered. It also applies them for a particular purpose, for in that offering which Christ makes, man joins, both priest and congregation offering it each for their own intentions, the priest as the minister of Christ through whom He operates, the people as conjoined with the priest and represented by him. The partaking of this sacrifice in communion also applies its merits, and in addition brings the soul into communion with God not merely by suggestion, but by a direct act. God visits him in person, in His divinity and also in His sacred humanity, and in so doing becomes food for his spirit. The power to offer sacrifice is conferred by the Holy Ghost in the Sacrament of Order, whereas for Protestants this sacrament, if it can be described as a sacrament, is merely a call to some special function in the Church, or a ceremony by which the Church authorises someone to exercise that function. It confers nothing at all, but, like an order in the Army, supposing capacity, merely 'details' a man for some special job. On other questions, such as the use of images, relics, sacramentals, belief in purgatory, and the veneration of the Mother of God, of angels and saints, Protestantism is more obviously negative, though here also, inasmuch as such practices and beliefs may be exaggerated and abused, and possibly even become substitutes for righteousness, there is a shadow of truth in the Protestant position, enveloped in a mass of negation.

§ 4. In all matters, then, in which Protestants differ from Catholics they do so because they deny, either in whole or in part, some tenet of Catholic faith—surely a significant fact in view of reunion, since it means that nothing has to be got rid of in Protestantism, but merely something restored, which Protestants now lack through no fault of their own. Yet it is not negation alone that lies at the root of Protestant diversity, for had all the reformers denied the same amount of Catholic faith, and not some more and some less, Protestantism, like Monophysitism or Nestorianism, might have remained at one with itself. Nor is it merely the repudiation of the Catholic Church, with Rome as its centre, that accounts for this diversity. Protestants were driven to do this because one cannot deny the faith of a Church, or any part of it, without denying the infallibility of that Church and repudiating its authority. They were thus cut off, if the Catholic view be correct, from the source of faith's certainty upon which unity depends. This made diversity possible, but it did not in itself cause diversity, for diversity in faith means difference in degree or amount of faith, and those different degrees or amounts

of faith that exist in Protestantism, being positive as well as negative, must have a positive as well as a negative ground.

§ 5. Luther began the Reformation, as we know, by attacking 'the sale of indulgences,' against which he protested with all the power of his mighty eloquence and all the vigour of his energetic soul; protested against it because it was an abuse, a scandal, a form of simony which the Church herself condemned; protested against it because it meant that money was being taken from local churches and given to others in which Germany had no direct interest; protested against it because the profits of the 'sale' were collected not by his own, but by a rival order. And from protesting against an abuse he went on in his enthusiasm to protest against indulgences themselves, against the doctrine that underlay them, the Pope that ordered them, and the Church that sanctioned and believed in them. He also widened his front and attacked pilgrimages, almsgiving, and, finally, all good works of an external character, even works of charity and penance. Faith alone can save you, he said; nothing else matters, not even sin!

Here was a brand new doctrine, a very comfortable doctrine for poor weak, human nature, but a doctrine that, in its negative aspect, had never been heard of before and was contrary to the universal teaching of Christ's Church. Luther knew this, knew that he had invented the greater part of the doctrine himself, knew that the Church would not support him in it, and knew also that without some support he would never be able to get people to believe in it. He therefore sought some other ground on which to justify it, and naturally turned to Scripture, as Wyclif and Hus had done before him, for Scripture was the written Word of God and was known and recognised as the written Word of God by everybody. In Scripture Luther found, or thought he found, support for his doctrine of Justification by Faith Only. Later he discovered that the epistle of James taught a different doctrine, but this difficulty he obviated by the simple expedient of getting rid of the epistle of James.

§ 6. The situation was now this. Whereas hitherto Christians had believed what they were taught, because they believed the Church which taught them to be God's Church and guided by God's Spirit, a reformer had now arisen who said that the Church was wrong, and taught them a new and attractive doctrine on a new, though none the less recognised, authority—that of God's Written Word. Yet even this was not wholly new, for the Church herself had been accustomed to appeal to Scripture in support of her doctrines. What was new was the negative aspect in this doctrine, the assertion, namely, that the Bible *alone* is the source

and authority for Christian belief. And it is this that matters, for it lies at the root of the Protestant revolution. Luther's peculiar doctrine of Justification by Faith Only has passed away, as it was bound to do in the exaggerated form in which he taught it; but his appeal to the dead letter of Scripture, in contradistinction from the living voice of the Church, has lived unto this day. Protestantism is based on it, lives on it. It is the source in its positive aspect of Protestant righteousness and Protestant truth, and in its negative aspect of Protestant diversity.

The Protestant principle, however, as thus stated, is not complete, for Scripture requires an interpreter, as do most books that have come down to us from ancient times. Who then was to interpret it now that the Church had gone? Obviously if Luther had that right, so had other people, especially as Luther had misinterpreted it in the opinion of many of his contemporaries. Accordingly, other people besides Luther did interpret Scripture, with the result that new doctrines sprang up on all sides at variance alike with Luther's and with those of the Catholic Church. Once the idea of the Bible as the sole rule of faith was started, it spread like wildfire. Everybody took it up. It became the Protestant war-cry. And everybody who could read the Bible, did so, forming his own judgment about it and his own religion upon it. All manner of strange doctrines were flung broadcast upon the troubled waters of religion with the strangest and saddest results, while one after another Catholic doctrines were tried by this Biblical court-martial, found wanting, and cast aside as unscriptural and useless.

§ 7. One can distinguish two principles at work in the application of this Scriptural axe. Some repudiated only what was repugnant to Scripture and were for keeping the rest, provided it was sufficiently innocuous. Others were for starting afresh and renovating all things on a purely Biblical basis. Results differed in consequence, but only in degree. Catholic doctrine and practice suffered in both cases, and in both cases diversity resulted, for there was always a fringe of doctrine about which men disputed, some asserting that this or that doctrine was taught by Scripture or again was repugnant to Scripture; others denying that assertion.

A Senior Chaplain of a Division was once asked in an officers' mess the time of the service for Nonconformists on the following day. 'Nine-thirty,' he said, 'in the Y.M.C.A.' 'Too early,' replied his questioner, 'and too far. What time is the C. of E.?' 'Ten-thirty in the same place.' 'That's better, but it's still too far.' 'Well, if you prefer, there's an R.C. service in your own camp at eleven.' 'No thanks,' was the answer, 'one must draw the line somewhere, you know.' That's just it, everybody has

been drawing lines ever since the Reformation started, and they have all drawn them in different places. Luther drew the line at indulgences, good works, and the Mass as a sacrifice, and so broke with the Church Catholic. Zwingli and Calvin drew it at Episcopacy and the Real Presence, and so broke both with the Church Catholic and with Luther. Cranmer drew the line at the Sacrifice of the Mass, the worship of the Eucharist, and the necessity of five out of the seven sacraments, and with him went the Anglican Church. Presbyterians and Independents drew it at prelacy and the Prayer Book and so became Free Churches. In each case Catholic doctrine was attacked and abolished, and in each case it was the appeal to Scripture that determined the question at issue. Whether men drew the line at what was repugnant to Scripture, as Cranmer claimed to have done, or whether, like the Puritans, they cut away all that seemed to be without Scriptural warrant, they differed with the Catholic Church, and they differed with one another, and so diversity grew and was multiplied.

§ 8. The Reformation had sought to restore the practice of Christian faith by denying the Church that taught it, and by rejuvenating that faith on a principal that, in its negative aspect, was entirely new. Those who reflected, realised full well that the new principle was leading to innumerable divisions in the fold, but, convinced of its soundness, they persevered, hoping against hope that through the grace of God truth might at length prevail. Their hopes were destined ever to be disappointed. The whole world was searching Scripture in the hope of discovering there the pure and unadulterated religion of Christ, and ever and anon some one would think that, led by the Spirit, he had found it. But the world remained obdurate. All he had done was to found a new sect on the basis of a new theology. He had but rendered confusion worse confounded.

§ 9. The consequences were inevitable, yet none the less appalling. The Church of the sixteenth century had a definite problem to solve. New interests were arising, new enterprises being undertaken. Commerce was opening out. New discoveries were being made in literature and science. Christian Europe was seething with unrest, its social order in a state of flux, revolution everywhere threatening. This throbbing energy and these new ideas had to be brought into Christian harness, and directed along Christian channels toward the great end for which Christianity stood. But just at the moment when the Church should have been occupied with this, whole nations fell away from her and tore her faith into a thousand fragments. Henceforth both she and they were mainly occupied with controversy. Sect warred with sect, and

all the sects together warred with the Church they had discarded. Christian forces, which ought to have applied themselves to solving the problems of the hour, were occupied instead with this internecine warfare.

Inevitably social, economic, and intellectual forces threw off the Christian yoke and became henceforth independent. Philosophy was discussed as pure reason dictated. The commercial world sought wealth only, regardless of justice. Kings became autocrats, and labour, deprived of her chief support, was left to fight her own battles. Development also was arrested. Men were ever going back to first principles in the theological world, instead of getting on from ground that had already been gained. The old Church pulled herself together, turned out the buyers and sellers, revived the tottering faith of many of her flock, and set to work with renewed energy both to combat error and to gain fresh multitudes to Christ in pagan lands. But her power was as nothing compared to what it had been. Once Christianity had held Europe together and kept tyrants in their place. Now the international spirit had disappeared, and Europe was torn with conflicting interests and warring nations. Once Christianity had influenced commerce, regulated prices, defended the rights of labour, encouraged guilds, inspired the painter, the sculptor, the architect, the writer, accompanied the explorer to foreign climes, captivated the humanist in spite of his scathing criticism of clerical abuses, moved the printer, who devoted his new found art mainly to Christian purposes. Now art, science, literature, philosophy, commerce, politics were free to develop on their own lines, untrammelled by Christian principles. Scepticism, profanity, paganism, licence, despotism, and the exploitation of the labouring classes were the consequences of this freedom, and against them the divided forces of Christianity struggled sometimes successfully, but more often in vain.

§ 10. Meanwhile in England and Scotland, diversity still multiplied. The seceders sought righteousness in both countries, and unrighteousness was the cause of their secession. Yet there was always an underlying appeal to Scripture. The Crown rights of Jesus Christ, laid down in Scripture, were being violated; the freedom of the Spirit, which the Gospel required, was wrongfully restricted; or there was still an element of sacerdotalism, condemned by Scripture, to be got rid of. Sure of their principle, and unconscious of the havoc it was causing, men went steadily on, applying the Biblical axe and drawing the Biblical line, the world in the meantime, sick of differences and disgusted with lines, becoming more and more sceptical and indifferent. Then came a

shock in the shape of Biblical criticism, which shook the structure of Protestantism to its very foundation.

§ 11. While repudiating the authority of the Church Catholic in all other matters, the reformers had acknowledged it in one. They had accepted the Bible as the inspired Word of God without question, because the Church had taught this doctrine so long that it had become bred in their very bone. They had learned the habit of appealing to Scripture from the practice of the Councils and the Fathers and the tradition of theological schools, and had kept the habit without inquiring as to its origin and ground. Their position was hopelessly illogical. Having repudiated the Church, they ought also to have repudiated Scripture, since it was the Church that guaranteed alike its authenticity, its inspiration, and its canon. Instead they made Scripture the sole rule of faith, used it as the sole source whence knowledge of Christ's revelation can be derived, applied it as the sole criterion whereby the truth of Christian teaching can be tested, appealed to it as the sole standard by which purity in Christian worship and practice can be measured or attained. If thus men wished to use Scripture, they ought first to have proved many things: (1) that it *is* the inspired Word of God, (2) that it contains nothing but the inspired Word of God, (3) that within it is to be found all that Christ taught, (4) that it was written for the purpose of teaching us what Christ taught, and (5) that we are capable of discovering this either by the exercise of human intelligence or by the aid of some special grace which Christ has promised. Yet, apart from the Church, they could prove none of these things, and even with her could not prove some of them, since she based her faith on tradition as well as the Bible, and claimed herself to be the interpreter of the Bible, as well as its guardian and the witness to its canon and inspiration.

§ 12. It was in vain that Catholics pointed this out; in vain that they suggested that Christ never ordered the New Testament to be written, never even hinted that it would be written, still less promised to inspire it; in vain that they showed that His words about searching the Scriptures can only refer to the Old Testament, since the New was not yet written; in vain that they indicated that the argument for inspiration from internal evidence applies equally to other books not contained in Scripture, or argued that, even if Scripture be inspired, it requires also an inspired interpreter. It was in vain also that they demonstrated the disastrous consequences to which private interpretation was leading: how, if each individual was guided by the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost must be teaching one man one truth and another

another: how, if each sect had found the pure faith of Christ, that faith must be diverse and contradictory; and how multitudes of Christians, despairing of ever discovering that faith with any degree of certainty, were lapsing into blank indifference or were becoming openly hostile. So implicit was the Protestant's belief in the Bible, so sure was he that it must contain the whole of revealed truth, so confident was he that he would ultimately discover that truth, even if he had not got it already, and so utterly convinced was he that the Catholic Church was hopelessly in error, that it never even dawned upon him that his position was untenable and the groundwork of his faith a tissue of mere assumptions. It was only when the Higher Critic arrived on the scene with his Biblical microscope and his historical genius; asserted that the Bible was but a collection of human documents written at various times and by various people; pointed out that each writer had a particular style, a particular purpose, and was influenced by a particular environment; and finally came to the conclusion that some books were not written by the author who was supposed to have written them, or even by one author at all; that bits of the Bible had been added by scribes and other bits cut out or altered; that ideas had been borrowed from pagan sources and garbed in a Christian dress; that John's Christianity was not that of the Synoptists, nor Paul's that of either; that there were numerous other inconsistencies, great and small, which might possibly be contradictions: only when, in short, a revolution had taken place in man's attitude toward the Bible scarcely less radical than that which the Reformation had wrought in his attitude toward the Church, that Protestants began to see that apart from the Church the Bible cannot possibly stand, and so to hesitate in the faith that their forefathers had based on it.

§ 13. The discoveries of the Higher Critics, real or imaginary, coming as they did upon a world that was already tired of controversy and the war of sects, proved for many a death-blow to belief in any sort of revelation. Men speedily realised that the attitude of this criticism, though destructive of faith, on Protestant principles was perfectly reasonable and sound. If man has the right to private judgment in matters of faith, why should his belief in Scripture be exempt? The reformers exempted it from force of habit; the Higher Critics had shown them up. Unless there be a Church to guarantee it, the Bible is merely a human and fallible document. The second link in the Protestant's chain of witnesses to divine revelation, the link that Luther had forged at the time of the Reformation as a substitute for the living witness of the Church, was broken in a thousand pieces. To base one's

faith on the Bible, except as an historical document which records for us Christ's own words, was to base it on human testimony and human interpretation.

Hence the German cry of 'Los von Paulus' and 'Zurück zu Jesu'—away from Paul and back to Jesus, and with Paul John also was soon to be classed as a mere interpreter, leaving us only the Synoptics. But in the Synoptics Jesus preaches righteousness rather than truth, and is a moral reformer rather than the author of a new revelation. Dogma, therefore, already discredited by interminable strife, went the way of the Bible, and with dogma went faith. All that remains to many a Protestant, sincere as he may be, is just 'the Historical Jesus.' Revelation he no longer believes in. It is the Church that invented it, just as it invented indulgences, images, and the Mass. All that really matters is Christ's personal example and the righteousness which He was so constantly insisting upon.

§ 14. On the top of this catastrophe, and indeed arising directly out of it, has come Modernism, which in reality is an attempt to reconstruct Christianity on a new basis—that of experience. As Luther discarded the Catholic doctrines of justification, the sacraments, and the Mass, on the ground that they had proved harmful in experience, so the Modernist discards other doctrines, the Virgin Birth, the Divinity of Christ, the Atonement, on the ground that they also have proved harmful in experience. And as Luther, having discarded her doctrines, discarded also the Church, on the ground that she was a false witness to Christ and had interpreted Him wrongly, so the Modernist, disliking all Christian dogma, repudiates with it the Biblical writers in whom it originated, on the ground that they interpreted scarcely less wrongly the Person and teaching of Christ than did the Church which carried on their work. The Modernist is a Protestant, but a logical Protestant. Instead of restricting private judgment to certain doctrines, he applies it to all; instead of repudiating only the authority of the Church, he repudiates also the authority of the Bible; instead of appealing to experience merely in proof of his own conversion or of the validity of his orders, he appeals to it to prove everything that he wants to prove, which for that very reason is extremely little. The Modernist rejects prophecy, because he regards it as merely the expression of human ideals; and Christ, as the fulfilment of prophecy. He repudiates miracles, because scientists and philosophers do not like miracles, and he personally has never had experience of such things; and with miracles, two-thirds of the Gospel evidence for Christ's divine mission, including the Resurrection. He will have nothing of Paul or Peter or John

or the Fathers or the Protestant reformers, because they interpreted Christ in one human way and his way is different ; and with them rejects the whole of that revelation to which most of them so consistently bore witness. He would keep a fragment of the Gospels, which he is pleased to admit are historical facts since human witnesses beheld and vouched for them ; but dogmatic fact, which is fact that God beheld and bore witness to, he will not tolerate, since it lies beyond human experience in the realm of Kant's *noumena*.

All that is left of Christianity in Modernism is just a few metaphors about spiritual incarnations and moral resurrections and rebirths, and a sonship that is only of the spirit. In its extreme form it is the consummation of Protestantism, for with out-and-out Modernists *all* faith has gone the way of Transubstantiation, the Mass, and the Sacraments. It is also the logical outcome of the Protestant principle of private judgment in matters of faith, since no two Modernists are quite alike, but each rejects or accepts or modifies or interprets as much or as little of Christ's faith as experience for him may seem to require.

§ 15. The more sincere and old-fashioned among Protestants are no less distressed at this state of things than are Catholics, who regard it mainly from without. But what can they do ? As a means of converting men from unbelief to belief, Protestantism never has been much of a success. The result of its missionary effort among pagans abroad has produced results entirely disproportionate to the zeal and energy and enormous sums of money that have been expended. Its missionary efforts amongst pagans at home has been even less successful. Of our intellectual classes but a small minority are interested in religion, while of the masses eighty per cent. care nothing for religion and little for God. The land of the Prayer Book has become no less sceptical than Lutheran Prussia, and in both countries this scepticism has invaded religion itself, and is as apparent in the apologist and the preacher as it is in the scientist and philosopher. Protestantism has power to sustain righteousness and to revive it *provided faith already exists*, but from first to last it has been in difficulties about faith, and against scepticism has ever been powerless.

And what wonder is there in this ? If a Protestant wishes to convert you, he hands you a Bible or invites you to join a Bible class ; but what is the use of a Bible to a pagan who doesn't believe in it, or to a Modernist who questions its authority ? If the Bible is to convert men to Christianity one must first show whence it comes, what is its purpose, and what its authority ; and this the Protestant cannot do. His Christianity hangs in the air.

The apostolic method of converting pagans was to appeal to Christ's power, manifest in His life and His Church. But for the Protestant prophecy is discredited, miracles uncertain, and the Church divided against itself. Once the credibility of their witness was acknowledged, the apostles did not argue; they spoke like their Master, with authority. So did the early Protestants, for, till controversy had undermined certainty and the Bible itself was called in question, they were sure of their ground. But when a present-day Protestant enters the pulpit the style of his preaching is radically different. He can appeal to Paul as a theologian and to John as a mystic; but the only data he can quote as giving him Christ's own teaching are the sermons and parables, which do not carry him very far. When it comes to vital questions such as Christ's divinity, he hesitates. Scripture seems to teach this plainly enough, but there are those who deny it, and still more who doubt whether the teaching of Scripture is credible. Christ, therefore, ceases to be a Saviour, and becomes merely a moralist, an idealist, a virtuous philosopher. His power has vanished together with his authority, and for that very reason authority and power have vanished also in the modern apostle, who preaches Christ with faltering lips, and would save souls by discussing mere opinion.

Oh, the folly of it all, and yet how pathetic! That thousands of hearts burning with zeal should be lost in perplexity, merely because their forefathers repudiated the old rule of faith and based their own on a new one, which they forgot to examine, and which, when examined, it is impossible to substantiate! That men who love Christ and would sacrifice all things to serve Him cannot serve Him efficiently because forsooth they feel that whatsoever they say of Him is vitiated by human ideas and at bottom is but man's view about Him! That men whose energy, generosity and devotion is such that they might convert the whole world, if they did but possess the truth whereby to convert it, should be still looking for that truth, still searching Scripture to find it, still holding conference after conference in the vain hope of arriving at some agreement amongst themselves in regard to it, and this merely because they have adopted a method which Luther discovered, but Christ neither suggested nor sanctioned!

2. *The Purpose and Scope of the New Testament.*

§ 16. The remedy should not be far to seek, since we know the cause of the malady. Luther's mistake was one of method. He used Scripture wrongly. Had he been less in a hurry, he would first have inquired whence Scripture comes, and what its purpose.

But he did not ask either of these questions. Hence the confusion from which the world is suffering, now more so than ever. If you build your religion on the sand of mere assumption, it is bound sooner or later to crumble to pieces; and in like manner, even granted the assumption as to Scripture's inspiration, if you ask of it questions that it was never intended to answer, you are bound to get at best ambiguous answers and so to be led astray. Get rid of assumptions, and ask the right question, having first determined what it should be, and you have a sound basis to work upon, and at any rate the prospect of an answer that will be intelligible and fruitful. Scripture is not to blame for Protestant diversity, for Scripture does not claim to be inspired. Neither does it promise to solve all problems. Luther alone is to blame for assuming what he could not prove, and for searching Scripture to discover the truths that Christ had revealed, without first inquiring whether Scripture purports to contain them. We can only know that Scripture is the Word of God, provided there be some competent authority, outside Scripture itself, which in the name of God can guarantee this. Our only legitimate course, therefore, is to begin by taking Scripture for what it purports to be: a collection of ancient documents, historical, poetical, hortative, written by authors of whom we know with a reasonable degree of certainty enough for all practical purposes.

Starting thus, however, we should not proceed next, as so many do, to examine straightway particular passages in order to discover what they have to say about particular points which tradition regards as pertaining to Christian revelation. We should first inquire *why* Scripture was written. Its various authors, like other authors, had presumably some purpose in what they wrote, which can be discovered, if not from definite statements, at any rate from the content of their books. An enormous amount has been written about the authenticity and date of these books, and still more about what they are supposed to be capable of teaching us, but comparatively little attention has been paid to the purpose for which they were written. Yet surely that should be determined before we base theories upon them, which they may support, but do not conclusively prove, because in all probability such was not their intention. The cause of Protestant diversity and consequent loss of faith lies not in Scripture itself, but in the use to which Scripture has been put for over three centuries. It cannot be our sole rule of faith or Protestants would have discovered that faith long ago and so be united.

§ 17. What then is the purpose of Scripture, or rather of those writings which were added to Scripture in apostolic

times, for it is with these that as Christians we are primarily concerned?

Of the Gospels, the shortest, simplest, and possibly the earliest, is that of Mark. He begins his work by announcing that he has 'good news' to tell us of Jesus Christ (the Son of God). His first bit of news is that the messenger came, whom Isaias foretold would precede the Christ, and that when Jesus of Nazareth was baptized by him, the heavens opened and a voice declared, 'Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' There follows a brief account of Jesus' own ministry. He was tempted, but angels ministered unto him. Then, when John was delivered up, he himself began to preach, as John had done, the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. To assist him in thus 'fishing for men,' he called fishermen, and later a tax-gatherer; all of whom forsook their occupations to follow him. Mark says little of Jesus' doctrine, but much of his power. He healed diseases and cast out unclean spirits. A leper he cured with a word. On one occasion a paralysed man was brought to him, whose sins he forgave; then, when challenged as to his power so to do, he cured the sick man in proof of it. Multitudes followed him, and their sick were healed, some merely by touching his garments; while devils obeyed him, acknowledging that he was the Holy One of God. All wondered, and declared that they had never seen the like. But the Pharisees, annoyed that he should eat with publicans and sinners, scandalised with his disciples who did not fast, and angered because he healed a withered hand on the Sabbath, sought to destroy him. He now selected twelve of his disciples, and sent them to preach, giving them power over devils and diseases, explaining to them the parables by means of which he instructed the people, calming the sea when it threatened to engulf them, taking three of them with him when he raised to life the daughter of a ruler of the synagogue, and on two occasions making them feed the multitude with loaves and fishes which he multiplied.

Of the parables, in which Jesus spoke of the coming of God's kingdom, Mark gives but a few examples. One of them, but only one, the parable of the sower, he develops at length by way of illustration. He also records some of the remarks which Jesus made, in conversation with the Pharisees, in defence either of his own action or of that of his disciples. But of neither conversations, parables, nor sermons does he attempt to give us anything approaching an adequate account. On the other hand, he does point out in several places how Jesus' preaching was received; how men were astonished at his learning, especially those who knew him as the son of the carpenter; how the latter said he must be mad;

while the Pharisees, also scandalised, attributed his power to Beezlebub; how the multitude took up another attitude and maintained that he was a prophet, while Herod declared that he must be John the Baptist, risen again from the dead. As a climax there comes Jesus' question to his apostles: Whom do *you* say that I am? to which Peter answers, The Christ.

§ 18. That is the turning point in Mark's narrative. Thus far he has shown Jesus forth as the Messias: now he elaborates his second point: how Jesus was a 'suffering Messias.' Straightway on Peter's confession follows Jesus' forecast of his sufferings, rejection, death, and the resurrection that was to follow it. He repeats it again after the Transfiguration, when three of the apostles heard a voice confirm their confession and bid them hearken to God's beloved Son; and yet a third time as they are walking in Galilee. 'Tell no man,' says Jesus, 'till the Son of Man be risen.' But there is little fear of the apostles talking, for they know not what it all means. Their thoughts are not of the mysteries of the Kingdom, but of the place they will have when it comes. More than once has Jesus to rebuke them, pointing out that humility, not ambition, will be the key to the success which they crave.

A little later, amid the acclamations of the populace, Jesus enters Jerusalem, where in the temple he preaches of faith and forgiveness. The priests, more hostile than ever, ask whence his authority? He replies, Whence that of John? and speaks to them of husbandmen, who, having maltreated their employer's messengers, are about to kill his son. They try to trap him with questions about tribute, the resurrection, and the first commandment, but signally fail. He then asks them a question: Why does David speak of the Christ as Lord, if he be merely David's son? Privately to four of his disciples he discourses of the future: on the one hand, of wars and bitter persecutions, and, on the other, of the gospel being preached to all nations and of the Holy Ghost who shall give them what to say. He speaks of hatred, of family discord, of false Christs and prophets, and of the horrors that shall attend the fall of Jerusalem; and, again, of the Son of Man who shall come in glory and power to gather his elect from the four winds of heaven. Watch, he says, for these things shall happen in your own generation, though ye know not the hour.

The chief priests having now determined to kill Jesus, he seeks refuge in Bethany, where a woman anoints him—for his burial, he remarks. Returning in secret to Jerusalem that he may celebrate the Passover with the twelve, he indicates to them who shall betray him. Then, blessing bread, he says: 'Take ye, this

is my body'; and in like manner with the cup. There follows a description of the agony, of Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial, of the trials before the high priest and Pilate, of the choice by the people of Barabbas, and of the crucifixion between two thieves, that 'Scripture might be fulfilled.' Then, the burial by Joseph of Arimathea; and, the Sabbath over, the visit of the women who find the stone rolled away from the tomb, and within it a young man who assures them that Jesus is not there, and bids them tell the disciples and Peter that they will see him in Galilee, as he said. Someone has added, possibly Mark himself, the apparitions to Mary Magdalen, to two disciples going into the country, and to the eleven, whom Jesus sends into the whole world to preach the gospel to every living creature, promising them power. After which, says the writer, 'the Lord Jesus was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God, while they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed.'

§ 19. Such is Mark's narrative. What is its purpose? It announces good news of the Messias. But it was obviously not written to inform its readers of what the Messias had taught, for of this it says little. It informs them merely that the Messias has come, and describes him as he was known to those who worked with him, and to those amongst whom he preached. It is a record not of sayings, but of doings, a chronicle of actual events to which eye-witnesses had testified. But it is also a chronicle with a query-mark as to who Jesus is, and a suggestion as to the answer. Strictly speaking, Mark does not draw the conclusion to which his facts point: that he leaves to the reader. Still less does he explain the 'mysteries of the kingdom of heaven': that was not his function, and would have been an anachronism, since at the moment *of which* he writes, those mysteries, in public at any rate, had not been revealed. He merely presents the evidence for Jesus' Messiahship. If the inquirer accepts the evidence, he will accept Christ, and all that Christ implies, which will then be explained to him.

This was the method used by the apostles themselves, for they considered themselves primarily as witnesses to fact, especially to the fact of the Resurrection. Thus, Peter on the day of Pentecost sums up Mark's evidence when he announces Jesus as 'a man approved of God among you by mighty works, wonders and signs.' Then, having shown that in the Resurrection prophecy also is fulfilled, he draws his conclusion: 'Therefore let all the House of Israel know most certainly that God hath made both Lord and Christ this Jesus whom you crucified.' His hearers,

accepting the conclusion, are baptized for the remission of their sins, and afterwards 'continue steadfastly in the doctrine of the apostles and the fellowship—the breaking of bread and the prayers.' Mark draws no conclusion, much less applies it to practice. His purpose is merely to set forth the evidence, which the apostles were accustomed to use in order to establish Christ's competence to know the mysteries of the Kingdom, and their own competence to expound them, as the representatives whom He had chosen for this purpose. All this Mark brings out clearly enough, but there he leaves the matter. If his readers wished to know more, they must accept the evidence, and then apply to an apostle or other teacher for further instruction.

§ 20. The purpose of Matthew and Luke is precisely similar. Luke, writing especially for Theophilus, who is already a Christian, narrates afresh the deeds (*πραγμάτων*) that have now been brought to fulfilment (*πεπληροφορημένων*), according as they have been delivered by eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, in order that Theophilus may verify the certain truth of the statements of fact in which he has been orally instructed.[1] His aim is to confirm, rather than to prove *ab initio ;* but what he seeks to confirm is not the truth of mysteries already revealed, but the authority of him who revealed them, and of those who are now expounding them in his name. And this he proves in precisely the same way as do the other Evangelists, namely, by citing the wonders and signs.

Matthew, writing for Jews, stresses the fulfilment of prophecy, his aim being to show that Jesus is not merely *a* heaven-sent messenger, but *the* heaven-sent messenger whom the Jews expected. The difference between Matthew and Luke, on the one hand, and Mark, on the other, is one of emphasis rather than of method, for all three appeal to prophecy, and with Matthew, as with the others, the chief appeal is to wonders and signs.

§ 21. Nor does the additional matter which the Gospels of Matthew and Luke contain, in any way affect their essential character. Luke gives an account of the promise of a son to Zachary, of a similar promise made to Mary, though still a virgin, of the latter's visit to Elizabeth, of her pilgrimage with her husband to Bethlehem and Jesus' birth, of the visit of the shepherds, of the circumcision, and of a pilgrimage made to Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve years old. Matthew tells of Joseph's suspicions and his dream, of the visit of the wise men, of the flight into, and

[1] *Or* in order that Theophilus may recognise the sure foundation of the doctrines in which he has been orally instructed (*ἵνα ἐπιγνῷς πέρι ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν*).

return from, Egypt. All this is fresh evidence, but it is still presented as evidence and not as doctrine. The query-mark is larger, and the answer, if anything, more obvious, but it is still the reader, not the writer, who gives it.

Matthew and Luke give a fuller account also of Jesus' preaching and parables, emphasising their revolutionary character, and thus making more intelligible the opposition he met with on the part of vested interests. They also bring out the authority with which he spoke, a characteristic which surprised the multitude scarcely less than did the miracles. But these longer discourses of Jesus are introduced incidentally by Matthew and Luke, just as are the shorter ones in Mark. None of the Evangelists claim to relate the whole of what Jesus said; they merely illustrate it more or less fully. Neither do Matthew or Luke attempt to explain what is meant by 'the mysteries' to which their Gospels refer. To explain these things was not their function, any more than it was that of Mark. Not yet was it the function of Christ, as they depict Him, but rather of the Apostles, to whom it was given to know them, that they might reveal them when Christ should be risen. Jesus' function as a preacher was similar to that of John the Baptist, namely, to announce that the Kingdom was at hand and to prepare the Jew to receive it, by inculcating penance and a renewal of spirit.

§ 22. This is evident from the very nature of Jesus' preaching. The Sermon on the Mount, for instance, tells of the virtues that are necessary for entering the Kingdom: how men must be poor in spirit, meek, dissatisfied with their present state, hungry after justice, merciful, clean of heart, peace-loving, ready to suffer persecution; how they must pray that this kingdom may come, and must seek it above all things, being solicitous for nothing besides; how they must be generous, counting not the cost, nor looking behind; how they must be humble as little children, not seeking after the first place or lording it over others. The parables inculcate the same thing. If men would enter the Kingdom they must be charitable, like the good Samaritan, or the man who is awakened by his friend at midnight; watchful, like servants who look for their master; diligent, as a woman who is seeking a lost coin, or stewards who have money to invest for their employer; prudent, like men who build, or kings who go to war, or even as unjust stewards, who make friends in anticipation of their dismissal. They must not be proud, like the pharisees, who seek the chief seats, but humble as are publicans; must not seek riches, like Dives, but simply the Kingdom of God. And when they have done all this, they must acknowledge that they

are unprofitable servants and in reality have done nothing; trusting only in God, who is merciful as a father with his prodigal son, patient as a husbandman with trees that are barren, zealous as is a shepherd that seeks a lost sheep. These virtues will endure in the new Kingdom, for in it the righteousness of the Law and the Prophets will be amplified and fulfilled; but Jesus' primary purpose is to prepare men for its coming.

Even those parables that tell us something about the Kingdom: that it will be differently received, as seed falling on different soils; that the Jews will reject it, as husbandmen their master's envoys; that outsiders will be pressed to take their places; that some will be ready for it and others not, like virgins awaiting the bridegroom; that different people will use it differently, as servants a trust; that it will contain, like a net, bad fish as well as good, or, like a field, cockle as well as wheat; that it will grow like a grain of mustard seed, and its influence expand as does leaven in a measure of meal—these parables also have a moral significance. They exhort men to be ready for the Kingdom, not to harden their hearts against it, and not to make a bad use of it, but to receive it gladly, allowing to its influence over them full scope. But in what precisely this Kingdom will consist, Jesus does not say: *that* men will discover when it comes.

§ 23. True, in a sense the Kingdom has already come, for Christ, the envoy, the sower, the bridegroom, the King's Son, is already in the world. But it has not yet come in power. Neither does Jesus state in what this power will consist. He suggests that it has something to do with 'the mysteries,' and that these have something to do with his Transfiguration, the Raising of the Dead, the Last Supper, the Agony and Passion, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, for it is of these events that the twelve are forbidden as yet to speak. He also suggests that this power is intimately bound up with faith, which some day is to become explicit, as Peter's became explicit when, in answer to Jesus' question, he confessed him to be the Messias. But as yet faith is not explicit; for the mysteries as yet are unrevealed.

Neither is it Christ in person who is going to reveal them, but the Holy Ghost, who, when charges are brought against the apostles and their doctrine, will give them what to answer. Christ's work is not to preach Christianity, but to prepare the way for it: by his words to prepare men to receive it, by his choice and training of the apostles to prepare men who shall preach it, by his works, and especially his resurrection, to provide them with the evidence they will need in order to vindicate his own and their authority, and above all by his death to purchase that power of redemption

without which Christianity would be meaningless and vain. And the function of the evangelists is to relate what he did. The preaching of the Kingdom proper and the revelation and explaining of its mysteries, they leave, as did their Master, to the apostles. They tell us Christianity is coming, and by whom it will come, but they give us no more than a suggestion, an outline, of what it is.

§ 24. Passing over for a moment the Fourth Gospel, since historically and in character it is the last of the New Testament books, we now come to the 'Acts of the Apostles.' Written by Luke, they purport to be a continuation of the story he has given in his Gospel. The Gospel has narrated the things which Jesus 'began to do and to teach' until the day when He ascended; the Acts narrate the things which He *went on to do and to teach* after His ascension, through the apostles whom He had chosen, and to whom He had given commandments through the Spirit (Acts i. 1–2). Gospel and Acts form in reality not two narratives, but one. The latter completes the evidence given by the former for the authority of Christ and His Church, by showing that He fulfilled His promise of coming again in power, and through His Church continued the work which He had begun when in person on earth. Luke does not merely describe how the Apostolic Church prospered and developed, he describes how it prospered and developed under the guidance of Jesus' own Spirit.

The operation of this Spirit is manifest in each successive scene. First He descends upon the Apostles as visible tongues of fire. Then He speaks through Peter, who declares that Jesus is the fulfilment of prophecy, a man approved of God, delivered to be crucified with God's foreknowledge, raised up by God, and made by Him both Lord and Christ. In the name or power of Jesus, Peter then bids his hearers receive baptism for the remission of their sins. A little later in the same name or power, he works the first startling miracle, and again preaches Jesus, calling Him now 'the Author of Life.' For this he is arrested by order of the rulers and ancients, whom he boldly informs, speaking under the influence of the Holy Ghost, that in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ alone is salvation. So, too, when Ananias and his wife lie to him, does he accuse them of lying to the Holy Ghost; and straightway they fall dead. Arrested again, he again announces Jesus as Prince and Saviour, of whom the apostles and the Holy Ghost, he says, together are witnesses.

Then there arose the first dissension in the Church, leading not to schism, but to the further development of its polity. Deacons are appointed to relieve the apostles of financial cares.

They, too, now become vehicles of the Holy Ghost's influence. One of them, Stephen, a man full of the Holy Ghost, is accused of blasphemy against Moses and against God. In his defence he shows how throughout their long history the Jews have always resisted the Holy Ghost, even as now they are doing. Philip, another deacon, preaches the Kingdom of God in Samaria, and makes many converts, so Peter and John are sent to inspect his work, which they complete by conferring the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands. Philip, led again by the Spirit, converts the eunuch of Ethiopia. Then comes the conversion of Saul, wrought by Christ Himself, who calls him to be a vessel of election to carry His name to the Gentiles. But the work of Christ must be completed by that of Ananias who instructs and baptizes him, and by Barnabas who introduces him to the apostles.

The Apostle of the Gentiles now being chosen, with a view to preparing for his work and for the solution of the problems it was to give rise to, a strange vision is granted to Peter signifying that the Gentiles also are to be received into the Church. To confirm it, a divine call takes Peter to Cornelius, upon whom, though a Gentile, the Holy Ghost descends. Realising thus that God is not a respecter of persons, Peter receives these Gentiles into the Church, and defends his action at Jerusalem by citing the vision and the incidents that followed it as evidence of the Holy Ghost's sanction. Barnabas and Saul now preach the Gospel at Antioch, Barnabas having been sent there by the Church at Jerusalem to confirm the work of less responsible preachers. Then, Peter being again cast into prison, prayer is made without ceasing by the Church unto God for him, and, much to the astonishment of some in that Church, its prayer is answered, and Peter released by an angel.

The rest of the Acts is concerned with the journeys of St. Paul, all of them performed under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and accompanied by numerous signs and wonders. Into this we need not enter, except to mention that the great controversy to which Paul's ministry gave rise, was settled at Jerusalem in accordance with the teaching that the Holy Ghost had vouchsafed to Peter, and that the decrees which were there made were promulgated not in the name of the Church alone, but in the name also of the Spirit that was guiding it. The Acts tell us a good deal about what SS. Peter and Paul did, but very little about what they said. They evidently preached dogma, expounding the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but only a few of their discourses are reported, and those only in brief synopses. Of the worship of the infant Church we are told even less than of its teaching. Luke still

supposes that, if we want to learn of either, we shall go to the apostles or to some one deputed to instruct us in their name. The purpose of the Acts, like that of the Synoptic Gospels, is not to reveal mysteries, but to vindicate the authority of those who were sent to reveal them, and in particular that of the chief of the apostles, St. Peter, and of the Apostle to the Gentiles, St. Paul; which the author does by showing us how in both cases their work was done under the influence of the Spirit that was given.

§ 25. The purpose of the *Epistles of St. Paul* is even more clearly manifest from their contents. Each was addressed to a particular community of Christians, and was written for some special and immediate object.

Timothy, having been sent by Paul to Thessalonica to inquire into the steadfastness in faith and charity of the infant Church of that city, returns with a favourable report, and Paul writes to the *Thessalonians* words of congratulation and encouragement. Incidentally he reminds them that the day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night, and exhorts them to be ever ready for it.

The Thessalonians appear to have been disturbed by this, so Paul writes a second letter, stating that a revolt must first come and the man of sin be revealed; hence, they are not to be easily frightened, as if the day of the Lord was at hand, but are to hold fast the traditions that they have learned by word of mouth or by his letter.

§ 26. The Church of *Galatia* was disturbed by Judaizers, who, even after the Council of Jerusalem, still taught that, in order to be *perfect*, Christians must be circumcised and obey the Jewish law. To disabuse the minds of the Galatians of this error Paul writes to them, pointing out that the law was merely a pedagogue, and that justification is, and always has been, through faith. 'Are you so foolish,' he says, 'that whereas you began in the Spirit, you would now be made perfect by the flesh?' Faith has now come in its fulness through Christ, in whom we are baptized. Through Him we have received the adoption of sons; and sons are no longer children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

§ 27. In *Corinth* there were worse dissensions, and scandals also. Some said they were of Paul, the founder of their Church; some that they were of Apollo, an eloquent preacher who had captivated many by his learning; others that they were of Cephas, the chief of the apostles; others that they were of Christ, possibly because they had known Him in person. There was also fornication amongst them, and abuses in connection with the Eucharist and with marriage. Paul writes to put an end to these dissensions

and abuses. The gospel which he preaches, wherein they stand, and whereby they will be saved, is the same gospel whether he or the other apostles teach it. What he has received, that he has delivered. This he proves by treating briefly of all the great mysteries, about which every one was agreed. He rebukes those who behave at the Eucharist as if they did not discern therein the Body of Christ; deals with marriage and its obligation at considerable length, and excommunicates the incestuous member of the community. The Second Epistle followed almost immediately, and explained why Paul had not come to visit the Church, as he had promised. In the second part, deceitful workmen, who set themselves up as angels of light, are sternly reproved.

§ 28. The *Epistle to the Romans* announces Paul's intention of visiting that Church for their mutual consolation in the faith that is common to both. In it he deals with the same difficulty that John was to treat in his Gospel: Why had the Jewish Church been rejected? Justification, he says, obtainable not through the works of the law, but through faith in Christ's redemption, which gives us new life, is freely offered to all, but has been rejected by the Jews owing to their reliance on the law; though not by all of them, and for the rest there is still hope.

§ 29. The *Epistle to the Colossians*, and that entitled '*to the Ephesians*,' were addressed to groups of Churches which Paul had neither founded nor visited. That to the Colossians deals with specific errors—the observance of Sabbaths, &c., abstention from certain meats, and the worship of angels as superior to Christ. Paul refutes these errors by showing the pre-eminence of Christ, the image of God, by whom all things were created, and through whom we have been redeemed. He exhorts his readers not to prefer the traditions of men to the faith in which they are rooted and built up. The Epistle entitled 'to the Ephesians,' which was sent by the same messenger, treats of Christ as the head over all the Church, which is His body, is animated by Him, and in Him is one: a concept which Paul applies also to the 'sacrament' of marriage.

The third Epistle that Paul wrote in captivity thanks the *Philippians* for their alms, and exhorts them to lead lives worthy of the Gospel. The fourth is a note to *Philemon*, asking him to take back as a brother a servant who had robbed him and run away.

§ 30. To *Timothy*, whom Paul had left at Ephesus to see that no one taught contrary to his doctrine (1 Tim. i. 3), Paul addresses two letters. The first instructs him in his duties as apostolic delegate, particularly in the matter of choosing suitable men for

the ministry, and of safeguarding doctrine; the second, more personal in character, gives directions as to Timothy's own conduct, warns him against seducers, and bids him come to the apostle bringing a cloak, and some books and parchments which he had left at Troas.

To *Titus*, who had been deputed to set things in order and to ordain priests in Crete, Paul gives similar instructions in regard to the choice of good clergy and the reproving of false doctrine, bidding him also come to him, and to send on in advance Zenas and Apollo.

§ 31. Of none of these letters of St. Paul can it be said that they were written for the purpose of instructing converts in the mysteries of the Christian religion, still less of instructing future generations in those mysteries. Each of them is addressed to a particular community or a particular person. Each is occasioned by current events of local interest, usually by some difficulty that has arisen. Each treats of revelation only incidentally, either as the ground of exhortations to the practice of Christian virtues, or as providing a solution of the particular difficulties, doctrinal or otherwise, which this or that Church is experiencing. The faith of Christ and its content is in each case supposed to be already known. Paul merely reminds his readers of what it teaches, applies it to particular problems, enlarges upon its moral significance, exhorts his readers to continue steadfast in the practice of it, and warns them against false teachers who would introduce Jewish practices, now become useless, or would substitute for Christ's teaching the speculations of pagan philosophy. There was danger right from the very start, that the Body of Christ would be torn asunder by heresy and schism, and to combat this danger by exhortation, warning, advice, is the main object for which Paul writes. He deals with each successive difficulty by applying to it the principles which Christ has revealed, in the course of which those principles develop into a theology. But that theology is not new; it is simply the truths, which Christ by word and by act had revealed to His apostles, more fully thought out; and as such is accepted and recognised by the readers to whom Paul addresses himself. There is but one revelation, Christ's; and it is the same whoever delivers it, Paul or Apollo or Cephas; for all deliver that which they have received, as did also Christ Himself. The test whereby the Church is to discern what does or does not pertain to this revelation, is continuity with the tradition which has come to her from Christ through His apostles. It is on this principle that false prophets are repudiated, alike by Paul and by the Churches to whom he wrote; and it is on the same principle that

the other apostles reject them in the Epistles which we have yet to discuss.

§ 32. The *Epistle to the Hebrews*, inspired, if not written by Paul, and addressed to those 'who ought to be masters, but need to be taught again what are the first elements of the words of God' (v. 12), shows how the sacrifices and priesthood of the old law have been consummated and superseded in Christ; who is a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech, and sitteth as man's advocate at the right hand of God. The old sacrifices are now futile; for redemption comes only through Christ, the author and finisher of that faith which saves us, as it saved Abel and Henoch and Noe and Abraham and Sara and Jacob and Joseph and Moses in days before the promise was fulfilled. Evidently in the practice of some people the Sacrifice of the New Law had not superseded those of the old, and hence it was necessary to remind them of the principles of that faith in which they should have been masters.

§ 33. St. *James* writes to encourage Jewish Christians, scattered abroad, to persevere in their faith in spite of persecutions and poverty, and to exhort them to the practice, as well as the profession of it, which some were sadly neglecting.

The purpose of the *First Epistle of Peter* is similar. It is an exhortation, based upon dogma, to which reference is constantly made as to something already well known (i. 8, 12). The *Second* seeks to put its readers in mind of things which they know already, but are apt in practice to forget (i. 12, 9). It also warns them against false prophets and lying teachers, who deny the Lord that bought them, bringing in sects of perdition; against scoffers, who mock because the day of the Lord has not yet come; and against the unlearned, who wrest the writings of Paul and the other Scriptures to their destruction.

St. *Jude* also writes to warn his readers against 'certain ungodly men who are secretly entered in, turning the grace of our Lord God into riotousness, and denying the only Sovereign Ruler and our Lord Jesus Christ.' Of the coming of such men, Jude says, you have already been told by the apostles of Christ: against them, therefore, be on your guard, 'contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,' and 'building yourselves upon it.'

St. *John* writes in a similar strain, 'not to them that know not the truth, but to them that know it'; reminding them of an old commandment that yet is new, namely, that he who saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in darkness even till now. John also warns his readers against false prophets and anti-Christs,

who 'went out from us but were not of us,' who deny that Jesus is the Christ, and in denying the Son deny the Father. 'Let that which you have heard from the beginning abide in you,' he says, by this test 'trying the spirits,' and rejecting those that 'dissolve Jesus,' since 'they are not of God.' John's *Second Epistle* in like manner exhorts 'the Lady Elect' to keep the commandment which she had from the beginning, that Christians love one another; puts her on her guard against seducers who 'confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh'; and warns her that 'whosoever continueth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God,' and should not be 'received into her house.' His *Third Epistle* is a brief exhortation addressed to Gaius (presumably a layman), because Diotrophes, who ruled the Church in that place, would receive neither John nor the brethren, but prated against them and cast out of the Church those that did receive them. Even that most mysterious of all books, the *Revelation* which 'God gave to Jesus Christ and sent by His angel to His servant John,' has direct bearing on the schisms and heresies which had arisen in the Church of Christ, and the persecutions which were threatening to destroy it. The bishops of the various Churches are praised or blamed according as they have steadfastly maintained the faith, or have tolerated heretics and evil-doers. They are to 'have in mind what they have received and heard,' and, if they have done wrong, are to observe and do penance. The evils that encompass the Church are vividly described by the prophet, but he is not discouraged. Victory is assured.

The message of James, Peter, Jude, and John is more plain to read than that of St. Paul, for it is less wrapped up in theology, but in substance it is precisely the same: hold fast to the truths that have been once delivered, if you would save your soul; and beware of seducers.

§ 34. We must now consider the Fourth Gospel, the last written of all these wonderful books. With its authenticity we are not concerned. It purports to have been written by the same author as the Apocalypse and the three Johannine epistles. It also purports to be a gospel, i.e., an historical account of the life and doings of Jesus—which latter point does concern us, for the picture that the Fourth Gospel gives of Jesus seems to be radically different from that which is given by the other three. Whereas the Synoptists represent Jesus as deliberately withholding the mysteries of the Kingdom, at least from the multitude, on the ground that the time to reveal them has not yet come, John depicts Him as openly declaring those mysteries. In Matthew, when Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ, he is told to tell no one, whereas

in John, Jesus proclaims Himself not only as the Christ, but as the only-begotten Son of God, who is in heaven; as the Beginning who speaks with you, and who *is* before Abraham was made; who hath seen the Father and is one with Him; who is not only to rise again, but will take up His life of His own power; who not only preaches the resurrection and life everlasting, but will Himself raise men up in the last day, and Himself is the source of life everlasting. In short, the Revelation, which in the Synoptics is purposely withheld, in John seems to be purposely delivered.

§ 35. Whence this apparent discrepancy? Is John inventing, or has he discovered fresh facts? Or is he perhaps giving us not history, but revelation in the guise of history?

A clue to the solution of this difficulty is provided by the circumstances under which those discourses were delivered, which John alone narrates. For these circumstances, which John is most careful always to state, show us that the discourses in question, though sometimes delivered in presence of the multitude, were not addressed to the multitude, but *either* to individuals (such as Nicodemus or the woman at the well) *or* to the apostles (as during the Last Supper) *or*, more frequently still, in course of discussion with the representatives of the Sanhedrin. To the latter Jesus speaks plainly of Himself, and Himself states plainly why He does so. 'If I had not come and spoken to them, and had not done among them works such as no other man hath done, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin, for they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father' (xv. 22–24).

The scribes and Pharisees still sat for the moment on Moses' seat, and were the representatives of God in the world. To them, therefore, Jesus came; declared Himself to be the messenger of God, the promised Messias; and stated His authority. The leaders of God's people understood Him, for they accused Him more than once of making Himself God's equal. Had they accepted His claim, they might have become the medium through which the new revelation should be preached to the world. But they thought Him the son of the carpenter, were staggered that He came out from Galilee, and shocked at His consorting with sinners; they also preferred the honour of men, and wished to stand well with the Romans. Hence, says John, they were blind; and in their blindness rejected Jesus' claim, accused Him of blasphemy, and ultimately crucified Him on this charge. The old Church was incapable of becoming the channel of the fresh revelation which Jesus brought, because it repudiated Him who brought it. Therefore Jesus formed a new Church to take its place. But He did

not do so without first declaring Himself to the old Church, that it might accept Him, if it chose; or, if it refused, that the cause of its fall might be manifest.

§ 36. Jesus, then, does not preach the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, even in John. He speaks plainly at times of His relationship to the Father and also of other mysteries: of His passion, death and resurrection, of redemption, of baptism, and of the eating of His flesh. But His words, though pronounced on public occasions, are *addressed either* to the Sanhedrists, who, being the husbandmen of the old vineyard, should have become also the husbandmen of the new, *or* to those whom Jesus, foreseeing His rejection by the Sanhedrin, had chosen to take its place. To the world at large, Jesus does not manifest Himself: the time for that has not yet come (John vii. 4–6, xiv. 22). Nor yet in the full sense does He manifest Himself to His apostles; for they do not understand Him even at the last. 'Now we know that Thou knowest all things,' they say, and 'by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God.' 'Do you?' answers Jesus; 'behold the hour cometh, and now is, that you shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone' (xvi. 30–32). There were also many things that Jesus had to say to them that as yet they could not bear (xvi. 12).

The Spirit of Truth must first be given. Then would Jesus show His apostles plainly of the Father. Then would they be taught all truth, and be led into all truth. Then also through them would truth be revealed to the world. 'I pray not for the world,' says Jesus, 'but for them whom Thou hast given Me out of the world, to whom I have manifested Thy name, and whom now I send into the world as Thou hast sent Me into the world; and not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me, that they may all be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me.'

§ 37. Though the Synoptists say little of all this, they do indeed suggest that at times Jesus spoke plainly of Himself; as, for instance, when He said: 'No one knoweth the Son but the Father, neither doth any one know the Father but the Son, and He to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him' (Matt. xi. 27). They also refer frequently to His controversies with the scribes and Pharisees. But to enlarge upon these points did not fall within their purpose, which was simply to depict Jesus as men knew Him, and so to prove His Messiahship by facts that no one could dispute. John enlarges upon these points because he has a further purpose in view. He is not merely establishing authority, but also defend-

ing doctrine. Difficulties have arisen which he is endeavouring to answer, difficulties concerning the nature of Christ, His relation to John the Baptist, and the relation between the old dispensation and the new. The objector says: 'If Christ be the fulfilment of prophecy, it is not you, but the Church of the Prophets, that ought to be preaching Him.' John replies: 'No, for the Church of the Prophets rejected His claim.' The objector continues: 'But Christ Himself was only a prophet, preaching very much the same thing as the Baptist.' John answers: 'The Baptist acknowledged his inferiority and himself gave testimony that Jesus was the Son of God come down from heaven (xxxiv. 3, 31); which was what Jesus claimed to be on numerous occasions, and what also His miracles prove. Jesus did not send us to preach mysteries without telling us what they were. We speak what we know, as He did.' 'That's all very well,' says the objector, 'but how do we know that you know?' 'Because,' answers John, 'we speak in His name and power, He being in us and we in Him, as also He said, and gave us the Holy Ghost to remind us what He had said, that truth might prevail.'

John's Gospel, then, was written in defence of Christian doctrine, probably against the Ebionites, Nicolaites, and Cerinthus; and the doctrine which he proposes to defend is indicated in the preface: (1) that the Word was with God in the beginning, and was God, the Maker of all things, in whom is light and life; (2) that John was not the Light, but was to give testimony of the Light; and (3) that the Light came into the world, but the world knew Him not; came unto His own, but His own received Him not. John's main purpose is also given in xx. 30, 31 where we read: 'Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of His disciples, which are not written in this Book, but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.'

§ 38. The purpose of the Fourth Gospel, therefore, differs from that of the other three in that, while they seek to establish the authority of Christ and His apostles *in general*, John seeks to establish it *in regard to particular doctrines*, notably that of Christ's divinity. Nevertheless John presents his Gospel, just as do the earlier Evangelists, not as an exposition of doctrine, but as an account of Jesus' life, and though this last Gospel gives much information which the others omit, they agree with it so far as they go, and at least give an indication that Jesus did at times speak plainly of Himself, even as John says. The Fourth Gospel, like the rest, claims to be a record of facts to which eye-witnesses testify; only in John's case there is also a claim that he, the eye-

witness in question, is aided by God's Spirit, which calls to his mind things that otherwise he might have forgotten. In a certain sense, and to a limited extent, we have in this Gospel a record of the revelation Christ made; for in it not only the mysteries of Christ's divinity, sacrifice, and redemption, are spoken of, but also other mysteries: baptism, the Eucharist, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the forgiveness of sins, the intercessory power of the Mother of Jesus, and the prerogatives of him whom Christ called the Rock, and to whom He committed the shepherding of His flock when Himself about to leave it. These mysteries are presented, however, not as taught by the apostles or by the Church, but in Christ's own words, as something which John remembers Him incidentally to have spoken of, or, in the case of His divinity, to have expressly declared. John's readers are supposed to be acquainted with these mysteries already. He merely alludes to them, or, in respect of those which he proposes to vindicate as resting on Christ's own teaching, cites them briefly in his preface. His claim is that the apostles are teaching not their own doctrine, but what they have received. Men are to believe it, because it is what Christ said, and still says through those who are one with Him. The Fourth Gospel gives us the data upon which Christian theology is based, but it does not interpret those data: it merely records them. Neither does it provide us with the whole of the data, as John frankly admits. Like the Synoptics, it is a record only of what Jesus *began* to do and to teach. If we would know all that He teaches, or understand truly what He means, we must still go, as the other Evangelists and Paul and Peter have told us, to the Church which His Spirit is guiding *in* truth already made known, and *into* truth, from known truth yet to be evolved.

3. *The Scriptural Rule of Faith.*

§ 39. What then shall we say of the New Testament as a whole? Does it solve our problem? It certainly contemplates diversity, both as a possibility and as a fact, and both Our Lord and His apostles speak of that diversity as disastrous to religion and destructive of faith. But do they tell us how to get rid of it? Jesus' prophecy has been amply verified. There are false Christs in the world, and these in abundance, though they are not perhaps quite what we might have expected, but rather are of the nature of false Christianities, each preached by good men in all sincerity, yet each different and all conflicting. False prophets likewise abound, though their sheep's clothing is righteousness, not hypocrisy, and the ravening wolf is not themselves, but the doubts that for

ever torment them. So great is the confusion that it would almost seem that the last days have already come; yet even then there is to be a light in the darkness, which shall save the elect from deceit. Does Scripture indicate in what that light will consist, or is Christ's prophecy alone verified, but His promise unfulfilled? The elect are there, recognisable by their righteousness, and in all folds seeking the same truth. Is truth forsooth ever to elude them, because their ancestors once quarrelled, and they are reluctant to repent? Or is Truth still attainable, if only we could discover the Way to it through the Light which shines overhead?

§ 40. What say the Synoptists? The question they answer is not 'What is Truth?' but 'Upon what authority do you preach truth, you, and that Jesus in whose name you preach it?' Mark answers this question by showing that the authority of Jesus is proved by His works, and that He committed that authority to the twelve. Matthew and Luke give the same answer, but add to Mark's testimony evidence as to Jesus' origin, and further evidence as to the character of that preaching by which He sought to prepare men for the coming of God's Kingdom. None of the Synoptics purport to be a revelation of the mysteries of God's Kingdom. They contain merely a selection from Jesus' sayings and parables, addressed not to us but to the Jews, and intended, not to reveal mysteries, but to prepare the minds of the Chosen People to believe them when they should be revealed. The aim of the Synoptists is to convince their readers that Jesus is the promised Messias, come with authority from on high, to which His works testify. They are *not*, however, vindicating the authority of *a dead Messias*, but of *a living one, who still speaks and acts and teaches through the apostles whom He has chosen and sent.* As He was sent by the Father, so are the apostles sent by Him, and he that heareth the one, heareth also the other. For the Synoptists the way to truth is the living voice of the Church of their day, not their own writings, which do but attest its credibility.

§ 41. In the Gospels revelation is coming, but has not yet come; the Acts tell us *how* it came. Jesus, though taken up into heaven, still continues to *do* and to *teach*, through the apostles with whom He had always identified Himself, and to whom He has now given His Spirit. The Acts do not tell us, however, *what* Jesus teaches now that His hour *has* come. They tell us even less about it than do the Gospels of what He taught while on earth. Luke is still concerned with the motives of credibility. These he now vindicates by the works of the apostles done in Christ's name, just as in the Gospel he had vindicated Christ's own, thus showing that through the gift of the Spirit, Christ and

His apostles are made one. What *they* teach, therefore, *He* teaches; and this can be learned from their lips. The way to truth which the Acts point out is the same as that indicated by the Gospels—not the dead letter of written Word, but the voice of the living Messias.

§ 42. The Epistles introduce a new element, for they give us not an *account* of the preaching of Christ and His apostles, but the preaching itself. In the Gospels and Acts we have a picture, —second-hand evidence; in the Epistles we have reality itself. Here then, if anywhere, we ought to discover the revelation that Christ made and committed to His apostles; for the apostles themselves are speaking. Yet, in point of fact, we never do discover that revelation with any degree of completeness or certainty, no matter how hard we look. Some of Paul's Epistles are written, like the Gospels, in answer to questions which circumstances have evoked: 'Are Jew and Gentile equal under the Gospel, or is he more perfect who observes also the Jewish law?' 'Why is the Jewish Church rejected?' 'Whose is the best doctrine, Paul's or Peter's or Apollo's or Christ's?' All these questions Paul answers. But neither Paul nor the Evangelists answer the questions that *we* should have put. True, as the Evangelists quote Jesus, so Paul quotes the doctrine of His Spirit, even as do Peter and James and Jude and John, when exhorting Christians to fidelity and virtue, or warning them against schism and vice. But the doctrine quoted has been previously preached by word of mouth. All that the letters do, is to refer to it, summarise it, apply it, use it for particular purposes, as something that has already been taught, and with which the reader is familiar.

§ 43. In the Gospels Christianity is coming: in the Acts that coming is described. Then there is a gap, and in the Epistles we discover only the after-process—the application and adaptation of Christian principles to the needs and circumstances of a particular age. This gap is fatal to the Protestant theory. Christianity in the New Testament is either just coming or else it has already just come; and as *we* were not there in the meantime, *we* missed it. In the historical books we watch our Lord preparing a banquet to which He invites us; in the Acts He is serving it, but we do not partake; while to the later Books, where we hoped to discover it, is affixed a notice, 'Banquet already served,' and inside we discover only menu-cards, portions of some of the dishes, and essays on how to digest them.

The Protestant rule breaks down. But the other rule is still there for all who will, to fall back upon. The mysteries have 'now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit,'

and 'what they have received, that they deliver,' for they live in Christ and He in them. Heresies are appearing on all sides and schisms threaten. But those will not be deceived who hold fast to the faith once delivered—how that Christ is the Son of God; and by this try the spirits, whether they be or be not of God. Tradition, not Scripture, is the rule of faith which the Epistles inculcate, as it is also the rule of the Gospels. Nay, against the Scriptural rule we are expressly forewarned in the Second Epistle of Peter:

> In the Epistles of our most dear brother Paul are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction; you, therefore, brethren, knowing these things beforehand, take heed, lest being led astray by the error of the unwise, you fall from your steadfastness. (2 Pet. iii. 16–17.)

Would that Luther, knowing things beforehand, had taken heed! What confusion Christendom would have been saved from!

§ 44. By the curious irony of circumstance the Last Gospel, which ought to be the main support of fundamental faith for Protestants, is by Protestants most disputed, and that precisely because the faith that it manifests is so clear. Were it not for this Gospel of John, one might well have imagined that Jesus had left the whole of the work of revealing the mysteries to His Spirit. But it was not so. He did speak of some of them plainly; though by those who understood, they were rejected, and by those who accepted them, they were not understood. John does give us the data, then, or at least part of the data, from which Christian doctrine has evolved; and it is upon these data, together with other data derived from St. Paul, that all Christians, Protestant and Catholic alike, base their theology. But there is this difference between them. Whereas Protestants rely *solely* on these data, Catholics appeal also to tradition, and even place tradition first, regarding Scriptural data rather as confirming, than as originating it. And, again, whereas Protestants interpret these data each for himself, Catholics trust rather to the guidance of corporate authority.

§ 45. Which attitude toward truth does John himself adopt? He is writing his Gospel against those very men whom in his Epistle he describes as anti-Christs, since they set up their own opinion against the teaching of the apostles, which is of what they have seen and heard (1 John i. 3). Christians, in John's view, having received an unction of the Holy One, know all things, and, if this abide in them, have no need that anyone should teach

them (*ib.* ii. 20–27). The Gospel adds nothing to this revelation once delivered. Rather it is offered in confirmation of it, and as an additional assurance that what men are taught, through the Spirit which abides with them, is what Christ Himself proclaimed as the truth when on earth. All things, says the Gospel, whatsoever He had heard of the Father, He made known unto His apostles (John xv. 15). In Him they were to abide, and His words in them (xv. 4 *et seq.*). Upon them He would send His Spirit that they might be sanctified in truth. Truth was to unite them; so to unite them in the Father and the Son, that this unity should of itself convince the world that Jesus came of God (xiv. 17, 26; xv. 26–27; xvi. 13; xvii. 11, 17–21).

If, then, some of the data out of which the doctrine of the mysteries was to grow, are given in the Gospel of John, it is not that we, as individuals, may build up our own Christianity upon them. To the individual the guidance of the Spirit is not promised, but only to those who are sent, and to them in their corporate capacity, as a fellowship abiding in Jesus and united in the truth He revealed. The test of a genuine disciple is the same in the Gospel of John as it is in his Epistles and Apocalypse. Those who, revolting against the apostles' teaching, 'have gone out from us, were not of us, for had they been of us, they would have remained with us' (1 John ii. 19). But, 'as for you let that abide in you which you have heard from the beginning; for if that abide in you which you have heard from the beginning, you also shall abide in the Son and in the Father' (1 John ii. 24). It is a common belief in that which has been delivered by the apostles, that makes Christians one in fellowship, first with the apostles, and through them with the Father and Son (*ib.* i. 3), as it is also, conversely, fellowship with the apostles, and through them with the Father and Son, that causes men to share in the Unction whereby a common belief is derived.

§ 46. A study of the New Testament serves but to confirm the judgment which the experience of four weary centuries has forced upon us. To use the Bible as our rule of faith is to misuse it, since for this it was not written; and to misuse it is but to use it, as Peter says plainly, to our own destruction. The New Testament, and indeed Scripture in general, is excellent for confirming faith, once you possess it, especially if you have reason to believe that Scripture is inspired; but to teach faith, other than in the person of the Messias and in those whom He sent, lies outside its scope. If we are sure of the authenticity of our favourite texts, are quite sure that we have grasped their meaning, are sure also that, if Paul wrote them, he was not interpreting, nor Matthew

interpolating, nor John putting a *logos* doctrine into Jesus' mouth, then possibly we may congratulate ourselves with a fair show of reason on having discovered *some* of the truths which Christ taught. We may also, by piecing them together, obtain what seems to us a coherent and reasonable whole. But we can never be sure that it is the whole as Christ revealed it, for we are sure neither of possessing the whole of the data, nor of having correctly interpreted them. As soon, therefore, as criticism comes along, with the suggestion that Christ also taught this, or did not teach that, our man-made whole begins to crumble, as it is bound to do, being man-made. It is we who assert that our texts are inspired, we who interpret them, we who have pieced them together. The whole process from start to finish is vitiated by a human element, and hence cannot but be subject to endless revision. Within a Church which is guided by the Spirit, a written Book may be of inestimable value, since to the inspiration and meaning of that Book the Spirit may testify; but without a Spirit-guided Church a written Book is useless, except as a witness to historical fact, or as the expression of human opinion. Once get rid of the Church, and the Messias, to whose coming the Gospels bear witness, has ceased to live in the world, and so has ceased for us to be a Messias. He has become a dead letter, which we may interpret as we please. The Modernist is logical there. If he chooses to metamorphose Christian mysteries, who but the living Christ has the right to forbid him? Only why stop there, if experience be our guide? For Spiritists, Christian Scientists, and Theosophists also appeal to experience, and are satisfied by it in some degree.

§ 47. There is only one way out of the chaos in which Protestantism has involved us. It is to go back to the parting of the ways, and to get rid of that principle which Luther introduced in contravention of the apostolic rule. Either Christianity must go, or private judgment about it. If that living voice to which every one of the New Testament writers bears witness, is silent, or has ceased to exist, Christianity is ruined; for our Messias has deserted us. If it does exist and is not silent, we ought to obey it at all costs, even at the sacrifice of each and every one of our cherished opinions. Our knowledge is finite, partial, ever being modified and ever liable to modification. God's knowledge is immutable, because He knows all things. If, then, God has spoken and still speaks, it is ridiculous for us to question what He says. He *cannot* be wrong, whereas we can and often are. And it is also as ridiculous to question one statement as to question another. That is the mistake that so many have been making for centuries—pulling to pieces and casting aside fragments till at

length there is nothing left; and all because they did not agree with this or that doctrine, which had come down to them as part of Christ's revelation, and was vouched for by precisely the same authority as that which they chose to accept. True, they may have been conscientious objectors, these men. But has conscience the right to criticise the ruling of its Maker, or to question the truth He reveals? Surely if it does so, it is conscience that is wrong; and the reasonable thing to do in that case is to reform conscience in accordance with faith's tenets, not to reform faith in accordance with a conscience that may admittedly lead us astray.

§ 48. It must be all or nothing with Christianity: there can be no half measures. Christ said so repeatedly, and experience has proved it to the hilt. To break one divine commandment is to break all; and to deny a fraction of divine truth is to deny all. He that has sacrificed Himself wholly for us, would ask of us also a sacrifice that will affect our whole being. It is also a real sacrifice that He asks; not the submission of our will to a law that we ourselves have devised, nor yet the acceptance of truth that we ourselves have reasoned out, but obedience to His law and acceptance of His truth, even as from Him they proceed. If we refuse any part of what is offered, or hold back any part of ourselves, He cannot abide in us, nor we in Him. What He asks us to sacrifice in reality is worthless, but it does not seem worthless till the sacrifice is made and we look back at it from His point of view. We love our own judgment as we love our own will, and, until we possess truth, we cannot *know* that our judgment is wrong, though we may have every reason to suspect it. We must therefore trust Jesus first, if we would come to truth through Him, having convinced ourselves that He is the Messias. The apostles did trust Him, though His sayings were no less hard to them than they were to the Jews; and, because they trusted Him, they became possessed of the Spirit of Truth in which the hardness of His sayings was made smooth. So will it be with us, if only we will trust Him, still speaking through the Spirit that animates His Body, for in that Spirit all differences are reconciled and all difficulties made plain.

§ 49. The trust which Christ asks of us to-day is in no wise different from that which He asked of His apostles, and they, in turn, of those to whom they preached, except that we no longer see Him, as they had done. We must trust Him wholly, not as Truth only, not yet only as the Light, but also as the Way to Truth, which He alone can show. To discuss particular doctrines can serve but little purpose. It was by such discussion that diversity

originated, and toward diversity it must inevitably tend; for the mind of man is finite, fallible, diverse, swayed by many motives besides that of reason and conscience. But if man be fallible, Christ is God, and, knowing the fallibility of man, has provided a way of overcoming it. So surely as He bade His apostles teach all nations to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them, so surely did He provide a means whereby they might learn these commands, and so surely also will He give to those that ask, the grace to find it. If only our separated brethren would cease for a moment from useless attempts to convert one another and us, doctrine by doctrine as it were, and, instead of asking *what* Christ teaches, would ask *how* He teaches, we should get much nearer to reunion by that one step, than we shall in centuries by any mere human method. For either Christ is false to His promises, or else He is in the world still, and will remain in it to the consummation of the world. And, if the Gates of Hell have not prevailed, His faith is with us too, and we can attain it. Only it is the *way* we must seek first before the goal can be attained, for the way is Christ's, no less than the goal, and only in *His* way can we attain it.

ESSAY VII

EXCLUSIVE CLAIMS—CATHOLIC AND ROMAN

'But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep. My sheep hear My voice; and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them life everlasting, and they shall not perish for ever. And no man shall pluck them out of My hand.'—JOHN x. 26–28.

1. *The Question at Issue.*

§ 1. IF the definite and oft-repeated claim of each and all the New Testament writers be valid for all time, there must be in the world a living Messias from whom we can learn truth, and by whom be instructed in righteousness, no less surely than if He were present in the flesh. The Catholic Church, i.e., those Churches the world over which are in communion with Rome, claims that in her, and in her alone, is to be found the concrete embodiment and living expression of this Messias. So, too, for that matter does the Orthodox Church, though her claim is less well founded, since she possesses neither catholicity nor in the full sense unity. It is also of less consequence, since it is as little likely ever to be accepted by Protestants as it is by Catholics. Moreover, it was in the Roman communion that all other Christian Churches grew up, whether as colleagues or as children, and from it they broke away, the Orthodox and Heterodox Churches of the East no less than the Protestant Churches of the West. Recognising, therefore, that there can be only one living embodiment and expression of the Messias, the Catholic Church maintains that other Churches, in thus separating themselves from her unity, went out from the true Church and no longer belong to it. In them Christ does not abide corporately as He does abide in His own Church. With them the living Messias is not one, and through them does not speak, as He is one with, and does speak through, her. She does *not* assert that those who are thus separated from her, are in no sense Christ's sheep, or that He does nothing for them, or that light and grace are given *only* through her ministrations, or that salvation can be attained by none except they be actually within her fold.

But she does assert that she alone is the Body of which Christ is the Head, and that, though He has many sheep outside His fold, whom personally He cares for, yet He acknowledges but one fold, and would that all were within it. He may give guidance to individuals without, but to her alone He gives *corporate* guidance ; for she alone is the ark which He has appointed and formed as the means whereby men may be saved. Without her, as Councils have frequently declared, there is no salvation, since those who may, and do, save their souls, though in body without, do not save them because they are without, but because, having accepted Christ and being ever ready and eager to do His will, in intention and spirit they are already within. The Catholic Church, in short, makes precisely the same claim as that made by the Apostolic Church through the apostles. She is Christ's body ; in her His Spirit dwells ; through her He continues to do and to teach what He began to do and to teach when on earth. To the world in which she lives, she presents not a dead Christ, entombed in a Book and obscured from view by wrappings which it is difficult to decipher, but a living Christ who is incarnate still in His mystical Body, through which His voice may still be heard.

§ 2. Were this claim accepted, the problem of reunion would be solved. But it is not accepted by those that are without. On the contrary, the exclusiveness of the Catholic and Roman claim is from the Protestant point of view one of the chief obstacles to reunion. The Catholic Church asks men to accept her as the Church of Christ, whereas they claim that they are already members of that Church, and that she ought to join with them in seeking a way in which they can come together as one in appearance as well as in reality. For Free Churchmen Christendom is the Church of Christ. No Church, no communion, no individual is excluded from it, however unorthodox his faith, provided he believe in some sort of way in Christ's divinity and in the efficacy of His redemption. For Anglicans of the school of Pusey and Gore it consists of the three ancient Churches, of which they count their own as one. In either case separate Churches are only separate communions, in which the life of Christ still flows and His Spirit still dwells. That is the essence of their respective claims.

On the other hand, the voice of this Spirit-guided Church in both cases is acknowledged to be silent. Its body, dislocated by past convulsions, is at present incapable of speech. Were it possible to bring about reunion, in the one case, of Anglicans, Catholics, and Orthodox, and in the other, reunion all round, this temporary paralysis would pass away, and once again Christ's voice would be heard in the world, as it used to be when the apostles

were living, and until the dislocation took place. That is why for these separated communions reunion is of such paramount importance, and why also they cannot but feel irritated with Rome, which still holds aloof, yet without which reunion will never be complete. Individual Christian Churches, including the Anglican in a restricted sense, have renounced their own exclusive claims in favour of Christendom, and would that the Catholic and Roman Church should do likewise. But she will not. Their claim to her appears no less preposterous than does her claim appear to them.

§ 3. It is these two claims, the claim of the Churches that are in communion with Rome to be exclusively the true Church, and the rival claim of Christendom considered as a whole, advanced by Free Churchmen, or of the ancient Churches of Christendom considered as a whole, urged by many Anglicans, that we must now consider. In considering them hard things may have to be said, but they will be said in all charity, and simply that truth may appear. That something is radically wrong with the present state of Christendom, as judged by Christ's standards, is evident, as it is also evident that no one at present living is to blame for it. This we must ever bear in mind, as also that we are not passing judgment upon individuals, but upon Churches, and are not asking whether all Christians are in some sense Christ's sheep, but whether the folds in which they are gathered are in reality part of Christ's fold. Can Christendom as a whole, or its three ancient *ecclesiæ, simul sumptæ*, be the mouthpiece of the living Messias, the Body which in its corporate capacity His Spirit is guiding? If so, the Catholic Church ought to renounce her exclusive claims; but, if not, Protestant Churches have renounced their claims in favour of the wrong representative. The whole question turns upon this point. Abstract discussion of the nature of moral and essential unity is useless. It is a question of concrete fact. What did Christ intend? What did He promise? What does He do? There are all sorts of unity, but the one that concerns us is that which Christ requires, and by divine power maintains, as the vehicle of the Spirit He has given. Does He promise corporate guidance, and, if so, where does it manifest itself? That is the only thing that matters; and the answer to this question, as to others, should lie in history, through which the workings of divine providence and of man's co-operation are to a Christian made plain.

2. *Corporate Guidance as depicted in Scripture.*

§ 4. As a grown man differs from a child, a tree from a sapling, a flower from a bud, so does Christianity differ from, and yet

fulfil, the promise of Judaism, as Judaism in turn fulfils the promise that was given to Adam and to Abraham. *Now* hope is realised: the Redeemer has come, and by Him the law of obedience and fear has been transformed into the law of love. But throughout there is continuity, not merely of development, but also of the lines along which development has taken place—continuity of method or policy, if we may use such a term in connection with God; only, in Christianity that method or policy is more fully expressed and more perfectly realised. All along, with a view to man's redemption, God has worked on a definite plan, which has been progressively realised, in part through man as an instrument, and in part despite man, who has continually rebelled.

§ 5. The main features of God's policy in dealing with man are indicated at the very start, in the words which He addressed to the Powers of Darkness after their first victory over Adam and Eve. 'I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, and it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise its heel.'[1] The life of man is to be a continual warfare in which good and evil shall contend for the mastery. But the warfare will not be confined to individuals: it will be a warfare between two seeds, two races, two corporate wholes—the powers of darkness on the one hand, and humanity on the other. Adjoined to this prophecy is a promise, made to the seed of the woman, which, though bruised, shall be so sustained by the power of God that it shall never completely succumb. Man's liberty remains. As he has used his freedom to violate God's law, so must he use it to work out his own salvation. But God will be with him, and somehow by God's providence, working through man's seed, humanity will crush the serpent's head.

§ 6. The next stage in the development of this policy is the salvation that came to Noah, again not as to an individual, but as to a clan; *through* Noah and his kindred, but *to* humanity, which in them was represented and contained. Then we have the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 'I will make of thee a great nation,' saith the Lord, 'and I will bless thee and make thy name (power) great . . . and in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.'[2] It was to the patriarchs as individuals that these words were addressed, and through them that they became known, but it was to their seed as a corporate whole that the promises were made, to them that they were bequeathed, by them that they were handed down and preserved—for God was with them,[3] and through them that ultimately they were realised.

[1] Genesis iii. 15. [2] Genesis xii. 2–3; xxvi. 3–5; xxviii. 14–15.
[3] Genesis xxviii. 15.

§ 7. The corporate character of the chosen people, through whom God was working, becomes yet more plain in the time of Moses.

I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God, and ye shall know that I am Jehovah, your God.[1]

Ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me from among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine: ye shall be unto Me a Kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. . . . Lo, I come to thee in a thick cloud that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and may also believe thee for ever.[2]

After Moses, there is Josue, and later, David, and then the prophets.

By their shameful infidelity to God's commandments the chosen people did their best to destroy the faith which these commandments were meant to sustain; but they never lost it, for God was with them in spite of their sin. When prophets were sent to recall them to God's ways, they persecuted them, yet treasured their words and the further revelations that they made. The survival of Israel's belief in the Messianic promise is by no means wholly due to the prophets, whose preaching supposed and worked upon it as upon something already existing. It is due to scribes and priests and teachers, who, sinful and hypocritical as they often were, none the less faithfully preserved the traditions of their ancestors. To this *ecclesia docens* of the Jews we owe our Old Testament, and to its tradition our belief in it as God's Word. For, though the spirit of its tradition was often misinterpreted, and its teachings in practice ignored, yet in this ecclesia, which by its conduct was ever denying Him, God none the less dwelt, preserving its tradition almost in spite of itself. 'On the chair of Moses sit the scribes and Pharisees,' says our Lord. 'What they shall bid ye, that do ye, but after their works do ye not.' Sinners and hypocrites as they may have been, the scribes and Pharisees stood to the people in God's place. Through them in their corporate capacity was God's will made manifest and divine revelation preserved. Individually many of the Children of Israel, probably the majority of them, were not 'governed with the Spirit and Word of God,' as Cranmer remarks of General Councils; yet through them, none the less, God infallibly realised the purpose for which He had chosen them—the preservation of revealed truth in an erring world and the preparing of the way of salvation.

§ 8. The growth in knowledge, expectancy and desire, which was

[1] Exodus vi. 7. [2] Exodus xix. 5, 6, 9.

necessary before the world should be ready to receive its Messias, took centuries to develop; yet throughout, in watching over and fostering that development, God used the same method or policy. Always was man struggling with evil, gaining victories and being overcome, yet never was he vanquished. Always did God help him; yet did nothing—revealed no truth, made no promise, bestowed no reward or punishment—except through man. As to the seed of woman the first promise was made, so also for that same seed of woman, universal, world-wide, enduring, was each successive promise meant. In communicating His promises, too, God always followed the same method. He never communicated them direct to the world at large, but to His chosen people through some chosen vehicle, patriarch, leader, king, or prophet. He also preserved the memory of them by the same means, operating silently and unnoticed through the tradition of the people He had chosen so as invariably to attain His end. Tradition, originating in God, is handed down by word of mouth, is embodied in ritual or custom, or is recorded by some painstaking scribe—a perfectly human, and therefore essentially fallible process; but what matters it, so long as God is there? Time and again, pastors, forgetting their tradition, forsook God for impurity and filthy lucre, and the people worshipped idols with the nations round about. Did the promise fail for that, or the corporate guidance falter? If it had done, there would have been no Scripture and no Christ. There is no reason to suppose even that God chose the fittest instrument for His purpose. The Jews were no less prone to idolatry and sin than other nations, and in the hardness of their hearts excelled them, for they *always* 'resisted the Holy Ghost.' Yet faithful or unfaithful, in repentance or in sin, infallibly was their destiny fulfilled. For God was with the instrument He had chosen, guiding and controlling it so that, no matter what it did, or willed or thought to do in its sinful human way, its efficiency, though damaged, in God's purpose never failed.

§ 9. When the Messias came, did He change this policy that had marked God's every act? In a certain sense He did. For He changed the vehicle through which hitherto the Holy Ghost had worked. The reason is apparent in all the Gospels, but especially in St. John. The Jews had formed their own ideas of what the Messias should be and should do. Consequently, when He came, they failed to recognise Him. As they had persecuted the prophets, so now did they persecute Him, and finally put Him to death. This act, of a piece with their conduct all along, was the final act, the consummation of a century-old apostasy, and through it God's chosen people forfeited the right which would otherwise have been

their due. As they had rejected Him, so He rejected them, not indeed as individuals, but as a chosen race, the vehicle of His intercourse with the world.

Yet even here there was continuity. As in the process of reproduction a second nucleus is formed within the cell, round which a group of chromosomes cluster, till at length it separates itself from the parent body and becomes another being, so from the Jewish Church was evolved the apostolic nucleus, round which were gathered the disciples, till at length it separated from the parent body and became the Christian Church. There was continuity also in God's plan. Those things which He had foreshadowed by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, were actually fulfilled [1] by the hands of wicked men, but none the less in accordance with His determinate counsel and foreknowledge.[2] God knew that the people He had chosen and prepared for centuries to become the vehicle of the Messianic message, as it had been of the promise, would spurn the Messias when He offered Himself to them. Therefore from out of the old Church did He Himself choose and train the men who later on should take its place, as the vehicle of the new message He desired to propagate.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent to thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wing, and thou wouldest not? Behold your house shall be left to you—but *desolate*.[3]

§ 10. Was the new house also left desolate? Did God choose a new instrument, give it a work to do, and then desert it? Or did He abide with it, endowing it, as He had endowed the former instrument, with power to fulfil unfailingly its function?

The answer of the New Testament to this question is emphatic from beginning to end. The choosing, training, and sending of the apostles in His own name and power is no less an integral part of the Gospel story than is Christ's passion or His missionary work amongst the Jews. He chooses them that they may be *with* Him and that He may send them to preach in His name. He shows them His inner self: His prayer, His power, His thoughts, the meaning of what He says. He is transfigured before them; associates them with Himself in the working of miracles, in the Supper which foreshadows the passion, even in His agony. To them is it given to know the mysteries of His Kingdom, that they may reveal them when the hour arrives. As all things have been delivered to Him by the Father, so does He make known whatsoever He has heard of the Father to them. And as the

[1] Acts iii. 18. [2] Acts ii. 23. [3] Matt. xxiii. 37–38.

Father had sent Him into the world, so does He send them, that they may give testimony of the Father, as He has done. He spoke not of Himself, and neither will they, but whatsoever the Father hath given commandment that will they speak. The apostles are to carry on Christ's work even as if He Himself were doing it. They will speak with His authority. He that heareth them, will hear Him, and He that receiveth them will receive Him. And conversely he that heareth or receiveth them not, is to be held as a heathen and a publican, and will be punished yet more severely than were Sodom and Gomorrah. Upon his attitude toward those whom Christ sends will depend man's salvation.

With the commandment and the authority Christ gives also the power. Those whom He sends will work even greater miracles than He has done. As He forgave sins, so will they. He is the judge of all Israel, and they will sit beside Him on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of the new Israel. What they bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. In power as in function He and they will be one.

§ 11. That this may come about He promises them His Spirit, the promise of the Father, the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth. He shall not be given in measure, but shall teach them all truth. In Him they shall know all things, and He shall call to their minds whatsoever has been commanded them. It will not be they who will speak, but the Spirit which shall abide in them. Others will abide in this Spirit through them, and so in Christ and in the Father. So perfect shall this unity be that it shall resemble that which exists between the Father and the Son, and by it men shall recognise God's Kingdom. Of which abiding the test shall be that men hear the voice of those whom the Christ has sent. Thus shall Christ's sheep be known, and those that are of God distinguished from those that are of the world. Not that there will be no difficulties, no dangers, no false Christs, no seducers. On the contrary there will be many. The war with the powers of evil is still to go on. Within there will be scandals, tares, false sheep, and a tendency to pride, ambition, and the desire to lord it over the flock. And without there will be persecution, calumny, hatred, false prophets, counterfeit miracle-workers, and incessant division and strife. Yet, though the bruise be still apparent, never shall the rock be shaken, or the kingdom divided, or faith falter, or the Gates of Hell prevail. For as God was with the Old Church, so will He be with the New, working through it for the salvation of the nations until the end of time.

§ 12. Such was Christ's concept of unity, as effected by corporate guidance. It was no mere ideal, but a definite promise of

something that He regarded as vital and necessary, if the new vehicle He had chosen was successfully to carry on its work. It was by the Holy Spirit that the Church was to teach and to live. Consequently she became organised, as the Jewish Church had been organised, since only through an organism or body can spirit manifest itself. Much was left to man, as is evident from the way in which the apostles and the early Christians acted, their discussions, letters, conferences, arguments, disputes. It was they who separated the work of serving tables from that of the apostolate, they who selected and appointed men for special work, they who at the Jerusalem conference determined the first great controversy of faith. But over all the Spirit moved, so that what men did, they did not of themselves, but in God and through God. The actions and decisions of the Apostolic Church, arrived at by a human process, and executed in a perfectly natural way, were so overruled by God's Spirit that the result was always what He willed. And she knew it, and therefore spoke authoritatively in His name. Belief in the reality of this corporate guidance lies at the root of all that the apostles have written, and explains the violence with which one and all denounce the obstinate, who resist, bringing in sects of perdition and dissolving the Body of Christ. Paul, in comparing the Church to a body, diverse in function and parts, but one in the Spirit which controls its development and life, is describing no mere Utopia, nor an ideal to be progressively realised, but concrete, actual fact. So also is St. Irenæus when he speaks later on of Spain, Gaul, Germany, Africa, the East, learned and unlearned, native and foreigner, being united with one heart and soul in the profession of the same belief. Irenæus' doctrine of the Church's unity, like that of St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Jude and St. John, is based not on promise only, but on promise realised in fact. What Christ teaches, experience has verified even in these early days.

> Where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God, and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church; to separate oneself from the Church is to lose the Spirit of God and to wallow in every error, tossed to and fro; to introduce schism is to sever and divide Christ's great and glorious Body and to attempt to destroy it; no reformation can ensue by this means, so great is the mischief of the schism.

Corporate guidance was both promised and realised, and is vital to the endurance of Christian truth. Somewhere, therefore, amongst the Churches which profess Christianity, it must exist to-day; and with it unity, which is at once the condition of its possibility, its product, and the token of its existence. But where?

3. *Christendom as Christ's Church.*

§ 13. Considered even from the point of view of the secular historian, and apart altogether from miracles in the narrow sense of that term, there is no institution, no social or political or religious system or organisation or idea which has a record at all comparable to that of Christianity in nature, vitality, endurance, or success. Jesus of Nazareth, a poor Jew of humble origin and no education, reared amongst working-class people, and Himself a joiner by trade, suddenly begins to preach, proclaiming that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, not for His own people only, but for all the nations of the earth. Of this Kingdom He, the Nazarene carpenter, is Himself to become the corner-stone, the chief shepherd, the ruling prince. To enter it all men must believe in Him, and unless they do enter it they cannot be saved. That His claim will be rejected by the Jews, and that He Himself will be arrested and crucified, He knows full well. Only thus can the Kingdom come. For when the Kingdom does come, it will be the spectacle of this crucified Jew that will draw men to it. Before the thing that it hates, the whole world, Roman and barbarian, rich and poor, proud and humble, white and yellow and black, will fall down in humble adoration. Pagan nations that look with contempt on the Jew will embrace a Jewish religion. Proud nations that hate failure will acknowledge failure as success. The only nation that will reject the coming Kingdom will be the nation for whom it was primarily intended, the nation whom God had specially chosen for that purpose, who, by the sending of His prophets, had been made ready for it, and who had been awaiting its coming for centuries. The rest of the world, despising the Jew, contemptuous of the working classes, ignorant of Messias, will acknowledge as their Messias a working-class Jew, whom His own nation has hung as a criminal on a cross, and in Him will be reconciled to God! Such was the project which Jesus proposed to Himself—than which from the human point of view none more fantastic or impossible of realisation has been conceived by the wildest dreamer that has ever lived. Such was the project that He did realise, completely, absolutely, in every detail and particular.

§ 14. As judged by human standards, the means by which Jesus proposed to realise His project were no less preposterous than was the project itself. To the Jews, whom He knew full well would reject the Kingdom, He preached righteousness in order to prepare them for it. To the Gentiles, whom He knew would accept it, He said never a word. To no one, neither Jew nor

Gentile, nor ruler nor prince, nor philosopher nor priest, nor prophet nor people, did He reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom, except to the authorities of His own nation, who on that account were to accuse Him of blasphemy and to put Him to death, and to a handful of illiterate fisher-folk, who, when this happened, were to continue His work. The latter were so ignorant that they almost invariably misunderstood what Jesus said; and, though He worked with them daily, manifested His power to them in all manner of special ways, stimulated their faith by making them profess it in answer to questions, prepared them for what was to come by telling them plainly that He must needs suffer and be put to death, nevertheless, the moment He was arrested, promptly forsook Him, and ran away. None the less, by these men, utterly incompetent as they were, and not by Himself, who knew His own power, did Jesus propose that the mysteries of the Kingdom should be preached. What sublime stupidity, what divine folly, what stupendous negligence!

§ 15. Yet, shortly after Jesus' death, a certain promise He had given—nay, two of them, are recorded as having been fulfilled; and straightway these eleven men—one has already committed suicide in despair—began to do that very thing that Jesus had commanded them; to preach the Kingdom of God with confidence and power. A tornado of persecution overtook them. They were hunted from city to city, scourged, imprisoned, some of them stoned to death. They still preached the Kingdom of God, and at the risk of their lives people hastened to enter it. The chief persecutor himself became a convert. The Gospel spread farther afield. Asia Minor was invaded by it; Greece also; even Rome itself. Naturally the Gentiles laughed at the idea of a crucified God. But they were converted all the same; and in such numbers that the Roman Government was forced to take cognisance of this new religion. Fresh persecutions ensued. On and off for two centuries Christians were tortured, fined, imprisoned, scourged, crucified, burnt, dipped in boiling oil, given to lions in the amphitheatre. But in vain. This strange religion that to the Jews was blasphemy and to the Gentiles such utter folly that no reasonable man could be expected to believe in it, grew like a grain of mustard-seed, just as its Founder had said that it would; survived that mighty and world-wide empire that had sought to crush it by every means within its power; and, when Imperial Rome had fallen, took its place as the greatest civilising force that the world has ever known. Thus were the prophecies of the Nazarene labourer, ludicrous as they seemed to the men of His day and impossible of realisation, amply fulfilled; and are fulfilled to this

day, even as Jesus said that they would be. For, in spite of the many vicissitudes through which Christianity has had to pass and the many obstacles which it has had to overcome, it is still preached in this twentieth century to all nations, and still inspires them with that same spirit of self-sacrifice, devotion, and virtue with which Jesus inspired His apostles. Of a truth is Jesus very God, and Christianity God's own religion.

§ 16. That is one side of the picture. There is unfortunately another. No sooner had the Christian Church emerged from the age of persecution than Christians began to dispute with one another about their faith, to call in question the very nature and person of Him who had made them what they were, to reject what they did not like and to accept only what pleased them, and thus to make each for himself a little Christianity of his own. This difficulty, at length overcome by the aid of general councils, had hardly disappeared, and the greater part of Christendom again become united, when political rivalries produced fresh schisms. These continued on and off for centuries, and culminated, on the one hand, in the complete separation of East and West, and on the other, in the dismemberment of the East into a number of isolated national Churches. The last futile attempt to put an end to this second catastrophe had hardly been made when a third and still more prolific schism-generating principle made its appearance. The Reformation that Luther inaugurated, not only tore whole nations from the Western Church, but produced amongst them a thousand different species of Christianity, each claiming to be the true one, but each at war with the other. And thus in this twentieth century we are left not with one fold, but with many; some big, some small; some claiming to be exclusively the fold of Christ, others claiming to be but special compartments; but each divided from the other and zealously guarding its sheep from the ravages of neighbouring shepherds. Instead of the one Church, of which St. Irenæus speaks, in which 'Spain, Gaul, Germany, Egypt, Africa, the East, learned and unlearned, native and foreigner, were united with one heart and soul in professing the same belief,' we now find ourselves with many Churches; some, mere sects that count their flock by the hundred only; some, national Churches coextensive with a particular people or race; some, great English-speaking organisations extending throughout the British Empire and the United States of America; one, that in a somewhat disjointed fashion embraces the greater part of Eastern Europe; and another that, though separate from the rest, in itself is world-wide, counts its flock by the million, and unites in the same faith and the same organisation men

of every race and every nationality, even as St. Irenæus describes.

§ 17. Can all these separate communions, which exclude and mutually repudiate one another and deny each other's faith, be regarded as parts of the one true Church which Christ founded? The Free Churchman so maintains. But if this be the case, then Christ's promises in regard to unity and corporate guidance are not only not fulfilled, but have been utterly falsified. The work of His Church began as a startling success, but has culminated in disastrous failure. The work of His Spirit has proved futile. In spite of a fine beginning, it has been promised and given in vain. Christ said that His Church should form one kingdom, one flock, one vine, one tree, one organic, living body, one spirit-guided whole. Instead it has degenerated into a conglomeration of conflicting sects, all at sixes and sevens. He promised that it should be preserved in all truth. Instead, it now preaches doctrines of the utmost diversity, many of them flagrantly contradictory. Neither, if thus it be constituted, is His Church being led into all truth, for the belief that yet remains common to the sects is becoming steadily more diverse, more feeble, and more vague. False Christs abound, but so far from being recognised as such by their fruits, rather they are recognised as true Christs, on account of the works which their false doctrines are supposed to, but do not, bring forth. While of that unity which Christ Himself assigned as the mark of truth, there is in Christendom as a whole no trace, but, on the contrary, its divisions are a scandal to all men and have caused many to despair of ever attaining Christian truth.

Nor can it be said that this diversity is necessary, if man is to be free; for in Christianity freedom flows from truth, not truth from freedom. Neither does man desire to be free in this sense. Quite the reverse. He seeks truth, and if only he could discover what it was Christ taught, would gladly believe it. But this he cannot discover, because, looking for it in Christendom as a whole, he can find no sign of truth's guidance in the multiplicity of its sects. Out of the dilemma which Christendom's many communions present, if they all be part of Christ's Church, there is no escape. Either the Spirit of truth is not present, or He is teaching some men one thing and some another, and is leading Christendom not into that undivided unity which is the mark of Christ's kingdom, but into that chaotic confusion which is the mark of the kingdom of Beelzebub.

§ 18. Nor are indications of corporate guidance any more easy to find if, instead of considering the Churches of Christendom as a whole, we consider them separately, prescinding for the moment

from that Church which *of itself* is Catholic and One. Of the fruit which the Spirit produces in individuals there is abundant evidence. Zeal for truth, esteem for righteousness, devotion to Christ's person and words, piety, self-sacrifice, confidence, hope, are everywhere manifest where there is profession of the Christian name. But of the fruits of corporate guidance there is no sign. Baptists and Congregationalists prelude by their 'independence' its very possibility, and though 'unions' have now been formed, they are reluctant to trust them to the Spirit's guidance, lest, operating through human agents, His meaning should be distorted and His rule become a tyranny. Presbyterianism is more highly organised, but instead of development by a vital movement from within, its offshoots have broken away and become separate entities. The structure is there, but the animating Spirit that means unity is wanting. Wesleyanism is in similar case. In fact, here, one of the main causes of the many secessions that took place, was that very Conference, which, if there had been corporate guidance, should have been the chief bond of unity. The Free Church Federation mends matters to a certain extent, but it cannot undo the disaster that three centuries of separatism has wrought. The Spirit is not generated by federation, or born by fits and starts. Either He has been dwelling amongst us all along in the organism He has chosen, or He is not in the world at all as the principle of corporate life.

§ 19. Anglicanism, thanks in part possibly to its Episcopal polity, but chiefly to its union with the State, has retained a certain superficial unity; but, as every one knows, it is only skin deep. Its members are no more one in faith, in principle, in ideals, or in worship, than are the members of Christendom itself. Neither are its clergy or its bishops. Of corporate guidance there is no trace since the day when the schism began. The voice of the Spirit should speak through the corporate Episcopate; but Anglican bishops contradict one another, and have always done so. They have also, if the *Anathema Alphabet*[1] is reliable, at one time or another condemned every single article of Catholic belief. Convocation might conceivably have provided a substitute, but for over a century it was silent, and its decrees have never been regarded as binding either in conscience or law. Neither will the Enabling Act amend matters in this respect, for the Spirit is not produced by spontaneous generation wherever there may be an assembly of men. It is a gift once given, which has either been retained or lost. And in any case, even under the Enabling

[1] Or *Syllabus of Errors Condemned by the English Bishops since* 1840, compiled by Sandys Wason.

Act, the State still retains a veto, as heretofore, over the workings of the Spirit.

The claim that the corporate guidance of the Spirit does not extend to the separated Churches will doubtless appear harsh to those that are members of these Churches. But, as a matter of fact, they do not themselves claim that corporate guidance, in the Catholic sense, is present in their midst. Dr. Horton says, for instance, that the Spirit's work may be traced

1. In all who are really born again by faith in Christ;
2. In all lives that are striving to be like Him;
3. In the constant emergence of spiritual leaders, apostles, prophets, poets.

All this we may readily grant, as also a more general guidance

4. In the ever-renewed influence of Christ and His Gospel;
5. In the periodic quickenings which come age after age;
6. In the steady urge of things onward and upward, and lastly
7. In the present aspiration after Unity in the several members of the Church[es].[1]

But the promise of the Spirit was given that the Church might *be* one and might remain one, and, still more especially, that truth might be preserved within her. There *is*, says St. Paul, one Body and one Spirit.[2] But if the Church be divided, there is not. It is corporate guidance that maintains the unity and catholicity and truth that Catholics claim as the peculiar characteristic and exclusive privilege of their Church, not merely personal guidance or that more general guidance which is usually ascribed to Providence.

§ 20. Of the separated Churches the only one that can lay claim to corporate guidance with any show of plausibility is the Orthodox Church, which has retained alike its hierarchy, its episcopate, its orders, its ritual, and its faith. Except, however, for the pronouncements that were elicited from it by the inroads of Protestantism, it has been silent since it separated from the West. The vehicle through which the Holy Ghost should operate, has, in fact, in this case as in others, been seriously damaged both by the schism with Rome and by internal schisms, which have destroyed its organic unity; while in Russia as in England, the supreme power in ecclesiastical matters pertained—at any rate until recently—to the State. The Orthodox Church neither acts nor speaks nor develops as one organic whole; nor does it attempt

[1] *Towards Reunion* (Essay on the Holy Spirit in the Churches), p. 358.
[2] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 15.

to do so, as it certainly should do, if it were really one body, informed by the same guiding spirit.

§ 21. The Anglican theory recognises corporate guidance both in the Orthodox and in the Roman communions, and by combining itself in imagination with these twain, produces what it calls the Church Catholic. Were either of these Churches corporately guided and the others in communion with it, corporate guidance would of necessity extend to all three. But they are manifestly not in communion one with the other. Neither are they guided by the *same* spirit. The Roman Church accepts the decrees of the Vatican Council; the other Churches do not. The Anglican and the Roman Churches profess the Filioque; the Orthodox Church denies it. Anglican orders, Anglican continuity, and Anglican faith by 'Romans' are emphatically repudiated; the Orthodox look askance at them; while by Anglicans they are stoutly maintained, though by different parties in a vastly different sense. In no sense whatsoever is there even a semblance of organic unity between these Churches. Indeed, the vigour with which 'Romans' repudiate alike Orthodox and Anglican, is more than matched by the vigour with which Orthodox repudiate 'Romans,' and again by the vigour with which many Anglicans repudiate both 'Romans' and Orthodox. How then can these Churches, which seldom meet except in conflict, and never as one organic whole, be said to form one organic whole animated by the self-same truth and guided by the self-same spirit?

§ 22. If one looks facts seriously in the face and studies not theories but reality, one is forced to the conclusion that neither the Churches of Christendom considered as a whole, nor yet the ancient Churches of Christendom considered as a whole, nor yet again the individual Churches of which these nominal wholes are made up, can validate a claim to that corporate guidance which alone can constitute them Christ's Church, unless it be in that one case which as yet we have not examined. There is common to all Christian Churches a certain element of faith, a common purpose—provided it be but vaguely defined, and a minimum of worship, in that all worship Christ. Between the Anglican and the Catholic and Orthodox Churches there is slightly more in common; and between the two latter more still, since neither has been 'reformed' in the Protestant sense. But of that organic unity which is demanded alike by Christ and by the whole of human experience as the condition and correlative of the corporate indwelling of one Spirit, there is no trace. The Churches of Christendom, both ancient and modern, are separate entities which mutually repel one another. Having *become* separate, they naturally retain a

certain element of *similarity*, which varies in degree with the cause that led to their separation. But similarity of feature and organic unity are not the same thing, even where the similarity extends to all features, as it does in the case of homologous twins, but does not between any of the Churches. In the case of the Churches similarity of feature is due to organic unity, but the organic unity to which it is due is now a thing of the past; hence also diversity of feature. All the Churches were branches once: the Orthodox, Anglican, and Scottish Churches branches of the Church Catholic, and the Puritans and Voluntarists, from which evolved the Free Churches, branches in embryo of the Anglican and Scottish. But they are branches no longer. They have been cut off and replanted, and so have grown each into a separate tree. Between those trees there is no organic unity, whether in structure, action, thought, development, or life. Each has evolved features of its own, as each has reacted differently in respect of its environment, even where those environments have been the same. Neither does the life of these branches-become-trees manifest much unity or strength, for as fresh branches have developed, in maturing they have usually fallen off. The reason for this is not far to seek. Of the original sap which flowed within them and gave life to them as parts of one whole, they have retained but certain elements, and these in isolation from the rest have no power of coherence, but are perpetually becoming decomposed. In the whole, as it was before the schism, the Spirit certainly lived, sustaining its unity, its holiness, and its faith. After the schism the parts ceased to be parts, and therefore ceased to share the Spirit's guidance, losing thereby the power to sustain either unity or faith. Holiness has survived in varying degrees, within them as without them; but is the product not of corporate guidance, but of that guidance which is vouchsafed to every individual who seeks to do God's will, whether he be in a Church or not. In the schismatic Churches of Christendom, neither individually nor collectively, is either the condition of corporate guidance realised, or corporate guidance itself a fact.

4. *Corporate Guidance as evinced in the 'Marks' of the Church.*

§ 23. But what of the old Church from which each of the schismatics directly or indirectly has broken away? Did schism put an end to corporate guidance there, or does it endure? It is inconceivable that it should have ceased to exist if Christ be God, for He promised it; and unless it exists *there* it exists nowhere. But is its presence manifest? If it is, the Church in which it

dwells should have four 'marks,' not in the sense of trade marks or registration marks, but in the live sense of features which it perpetually produces and sustains, as the features of all living things are produced and sustained, by their animating spirits or forces. Those features or marks are the functions which the Church should continuously fulfil in obedience to Christ's commands. They are the purposes for which He designed her, and for the realisation of which His Spirit was bestowed. She must be *one* as He and the Father are one, in knowledge and in word and in action, that so men may recognise in her the living Messias, who sent her and speaks through her, as the Father sent, and spoke through, His Son. She must also speak truth to all nations and for all time, even as He bade her; or, in other words, must be 'catholic and apostolic,' world-wide and continuous in time, without schism and without breaks in her development, one in extent and in duration, as she is one in structure and life. She must also produce holiness, for holiness should be the consequence of revealed truth, as the desire for holiness is in some sense the condition of its acceptance. But does the old Church do these things? Has she done them always, in man and through man and in spite of man, even as Christ commanded, and as her predecessor of Israelite days did?

§ 24. There can be no question as to the mark of unity. The Churches that are in communion with Rome certainly form one fellowship or Church; and of the many bonds which unite them in this fellowship first and foremost is their faith. Ask any Catholic bishop or priest the world over to explain to you the Catholic doctrine on any particular point, and he will give you substantially the same answer; and in it his flock would bear him out. This surely is in itself somewhat remarkable, especially when one bears in mind that, if the same question were asked of scientists or lawyers or statesmen or of the representatives of any other religion, they would be certain to give very different answers. How is one to account for it? Whence comes it that Englishmen and Irishmen, Frenchmen and Germans, Americans and Mexicans, Italians and Austrians and Czechs, men of almost every shade of political belief and of every race and mentality and rank and occupation, diverse as they are in all other respects, should none the less be agreed in that one supreme matter of faith? Mere tradition will not account for it; for human traditions vary, and tend to become contradictory, especially as they spread. Nor yet can mere authority account for it, or written declarations and decrees. For why should so many millions freely and gladly submit to this authority, and as freely and gladly reverence and obey these decrees? There must

be some guiding Spirit which animates the whole and inspires alike teachers and taught. A complex organism can remain one only so long as there is a vital force within it. Take that away, and inevitably the organism corrupts and breaks asunder.

§ 25. The old Church is also one in worship. Enter a Catholic Church in any part of the world and you will find there the same sacrifice offered; inquire as to its life and you will find it is sustained by the same seven sacraments—again a fact of supreme significance when one remembers what a stupendous mystery that sacrifice is, and the astounding devotion it arouses, not to mention the mystery that all sacraments involve. Whence this unanimity? Agreement in detail, where it exists, can be accounted for by regulations made by the same authority, but the root of substantial agreement lies deeper, and is presupposed by the fact that regulations are obeyed. The source of this wonderful unanimity of worship is to be found in the faith which it expresses. It is the Spirit that produces unanimity of worship, through the truth which it sustains in action as well as in belief.

§ 26. Unity of policy and organisation also has much to do with unity of faith and worship, for it is through what is one in structure and organism, that spirit works. Cut out a man's heart, or destroy his brain, or sever his spinal cord, and he ceases to live. So also do the parts of his body cease to live, if they be severed from the whole, or if injury or disease prevent their proper interaction. In their anxiety to sustain the claim of their own Churches to catholicity, some have asserted that the intercourse and communion which unity brings is accidental and unnecessary. It is, on the contrary, essential to the life of any organised body, for it is in the interaction of differentiated parts under the control of a single principle or force that the life of an organism consists. Meetings for worship and prayer, confraternities and institutions organised for some particular work, councils assembled for consultation, these things are not merely the outcome of unity, but are the condition of its survival, and the means by which development in unity is fostered and at the same time kept within bounds. As well deny the necessity for intercourse and fellowship in a Church that would live, as deny it in an empire or nation that would prosper. Had not external unity been the necessary consequence of an indwelling Spirit, Christ would never have chosen it as the mark whereby the presence of that Spirit should be known and the unity of Truth be shown forth.

§ 27. Mr. C. H. S. Matthews admits that 'we have in the Roman Catholic Church a realised ideal of unity,' but objects that, 'as a matter of fact, it has not brought the world to faith, nor shows

any signs of doing so.'[1] But, as a matter of fact, in so far as the world *has* been brought to faith, it is organised unity that is responsible for it. The whole history of Christianity, past and present, in the mission field as in home countries, bears witness to the reality of organised unity as a factor in faith's propagation, and to diversity and division as the cause of its decline. As unity decreases, faith wavers: as it increases, faith grows stronger and more prolific. True, there is a vast amount of indifference and infidelity even in Catholic countries. But this is inevitable, and was actually foreseen by Christ. In Him was life, and life was the light of men; but the light shone in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. As it was then, so it is now, and ever must be in some degree; for Christians are not *of* this world, but are called and chosen from it. Quite possibly the Catholic Church does not show any signs of converting the *whole* world to faith, but she is certainly doing her best to convert most of it. She also does it with striking success, even in Protestant countries where that faith is still hated, as Christ said that it would be, and its power, like His own, is attributed to the devil.

§ 28. The second characteristic that Christ's Church must possess is catholicity. To sustain the claim of any Church, save the old Church, to this 'mark' is impossible, except by introducing between many Churches a unity that in fact does not exist. This is true not of the Anglican and Free Churches only, but also of the Orthodox Church, which preaches the gospel in the East and in one or two missions, but by no means preaches it to all nations. The old Church, on the other hand, in spite of manifold losses, still fulfils to the letter the command of her founder, and preaches to every nation and race. In Italy, France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Austria, Mexico, and South America, men for the most part are either Catholics or nothing. The greater part of Ireland is Catholic, and in the United States, Canada, and Germany, the proportion is about one-third. In Great Britain, Australia, South Africa, and British Dominions generally, Catholics, though not so numerous, form none the less a considerable portion of the population, as they do also in Holland and Scandinavia. In the East of Europe and in Western Asia there is, side by side with Orthodox Churches, a Uniate Church that is in full communion with Rome; while in non-Christian parts of the world, such as India, China, Japan, and Central Africa, thriving and well-organised Catholic missions labour incessantly. The catholicity of the Catholic Church does not exist in books only, or in the imagination of zealous controversialists: it is concrete, real fact, and to those

[1] *Faith or Fear*, p. 190.

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who share in it, is of supreme value and importance. It is no small thing everywhere to be admitted to the same fellowship, to partake at the same altar-rail, to share in the same sacrifice and sacraments, and everywhere, though a foreigner, to be received as a brother in Christ. To claim catholicity is one thing: to be really a member of a Church that *is* Catholic, is quite another. What is it, then, in this one Church that not only causes her to seek catholicity, but actually produces it in fact? It bespeaks a vital energy that cannot but realise in its environment the law of its life. If new lands are discovered, the Church must at once send apostles to convert them. If losses occur amongst the already converted, she cannot desist until she has won them back. How different that to the spirit which let the masses of England sink without an effort into ignorance and paganism, and for two whole centuries never thought of the heathen of far-off lands! Yet not to any difference in the character of the peoples who constitute the various Churches can this difference in catholicity be due, but to the Spirit which animates the old Church, and at all times constrains her members to obey the law of her being.

§ 29. The third 'mark' by which the Church of Christ should be recognisable is apostolicity. If Christian preachers and teachers and ministers are messengers of the Lord, they should be sent by Him, as He was sent by the Father, and the Holy Ghost by Father and Son; and of this 'mission' there should be concrete, tangible proof. Any man may assume to himself the office of preaching, and may validate it in the eyes of his hearers by the power of his eloquence and the example of a virtuous life. But eloquence and virtue are of little value as tokens of truth. Neither do they imply the power to administer sacraments. The only sure test of apostolicity in these matters is the rule given in Scripture: what we have received, that we hand down to you. This rule in the Catholic Church has ever been faithfully observed. Popes and councils have never attempted to determine what truth is *ab initio*, still less to modify or adapt it. Their aim has always been just simply to make clear, in regard to some point in dispute, what Christ's teaching is, as contained in tradition and Scripture. Nor, until the advent of the Reformation, did anyone dream that in this way truth had been added to or corrupted: it had merely evolved from the implicit to the explicit.

So Catholics still believe. But Protestants allege that truth took a wrong turn and developed into error. Who is right? Christ did not say how truth would develop; He merely said that it would develop as a grain of mustard-seed, and gave the Holy Ghost that it might *not* develop in the wrong way through the

fault of fallible men. It did develop, and the result of that development is the faith of Catholics as it exists to-day. *Conceivably* it might have developed in some other way. But it did not; and there has been no break, no going back on the past, no contradiction. There has been, on the contrary, a steady growth throughout, guided always by the same principle that what has been delivered should not be altered, but ever faithfully preserved. In this matter there can be no question that the Church, as a human organisation, has loyally done her work. In all that she has ever uttered or ordained, she has ever sought to teach and ordain that which Christ commanded. If she has failed, if she has taught what Christ did not command, or omitted to teach what He did, it is because she has not been reminded of all things which He commanded, as was promised; it is because not truth, but error, within her has been allowed to prevail. But this is unthinkable to one who believes in the Messias. Moreover, how comes it that in a matter such as faith, while outside the Church opinion has always been diverse and unstable, within her decrees and declarations and documents, though drawn up by many minds and at various epochs of her history, should none the less be perfectly compatible—nay, should indicate a genuine development in clearness of concept and precision of expression?

§ 30. In that other aspect of apostolicity which is concerned with orders and sacraments there has also been a most remarkable continuity. Sending and delegating by the laying-on of hands has gone on continuously since the day when the Holy Ghost Himself was sent as the delegate of the Father and Son. Ritual and ceremonial have developed, that hereby the significance of each rite might become the more clear. But there has been no break, not even a doubtful one, no going back on the past, no drastic expurgations. Neither has there been carelessness, indifference, or neglect. The belief, therefore, that the authority and power which Christ committed to His apostles, is still living in the Church to-day, that her sacrifice is still acceptable, that she still has a right to speak with confidence in His name, that whom she baptizes thereby becomes a child of God, whom she looses from sin is loosed, what she consecrates becomes our spiritual food, and again that whom she ordains for these purposes has power to do that for which she ordains him, is no less certain than are the promises Christ made, and the fact of the Church's existence. Indeed, if such authority and power did not exist through the indwelling Spirit that validates it, the persistence of belief in it, the sacrifices that are made on account of this belief, and its power of propagating itself in this critical and sceptical age, would be wholly unaccount-

able. A whole-hearted and effective belief in apostolicity, no less than apostolicity itself, supposes in the matter of order, as in that of truth, the presence of God's Spirit, which at once originates and sustains it.

§ 31. Apostolicity and catholicity are but different aspects of that corporate oneness which the Spirit maintains in Christ's Church in all places and at all times. The mark of 'holiness' falls in a somewhat different category. Holiness is truth in its dynamic and personal aspect, truth operating in the individual, truth issuing in righteousness. Christ prayed 'sanctify them in truth.' It is through truth, therefore, that is produced that holiness, diverse in its manifestations, yet one in principle, which has been characteristic of Catholicism in all ages. Not indeed that the seed of truth always falls on fertile ground, or that tares are conspicuous by their absence. On the contrary, the life of the Church, like the life of man, is a perpetual warfare, and the effect that her preaching produces, varies with each age and with each individual. But, though holiness may differ in extent and character and degree, it is never wanting. In all ages there have been saints, and in all ages the sanctity of the Church, in varying degrees as they respond to her enthusiasm, permeates all classes.

Those outside the Church, interested mostly in the tares, have overlooked the wheat that is ever growing with them, a phenomenon that is accounted for mainly by prejudice, but also in part by the fact that holiness is so intimate and personal that to appreciate it fully one must live in the midst of it and partake of it oneself. Yet holiness does produce external effects, which have not been unnoticed during the war. The orphanage at Locre, peacefully carrying on for four years within easy range of the enemy; the Neuve Eglise nuns making lace during a German bombardment; the convent at St. Venant, left behind during the retreat with its two hundred lunatic patients, foodless yet unperturbed; the crowded churches of Belgium and of Northern France with their ever open doors and the people who go there to pray; family prayers in thousands of billets and even in crowded estaminets; the devotion of the children, whose offering of prayers was so gratefully accepted by Marshal Foch; these and a host of other incidents have brought home to many in our armies not merely the presence of holiness, but also its value. But of a truth holiness exists everywhere where Catholic faith finds expression, and if anyone doubts its existence, he has only to live amongst the poor of a Catholic village, to visit a Catholic hospital, to make a retreat, or to spend a week in a monastery or convent, in order to convince himself that he is under a delusion.

§ 32. Some critics, regarding Catholic holiness from without, have attributed it merely to mysticism and the sacramental system. Mr. Matthews, for instance, says that if religiousness were possible apart from truth and it were not necessary to ask for an intellectually satisfying religion, 'there never could be any religion so entirely satisfactory as Romanism with its sense of largeness and mystery and certainty';[1] and Dr. Orchard, that 'the sacramental system provides an opportunity for mystical contact, but often leaves out of account both the need for clear intellectual comprehension of God and consistent expression in daily life.'[2] For those inside the Church, on the other hand, it is precisely the underlying truth that religiousness supposes, its divine authority, its scriptural warrant, its patristic sanction, and the vast, though wonderfully consistent, theology which has evolved from it, that constitutes its chief attraction; and, without this, sacramentalism and mysticism would be nothing worth. It is possible to be mysterious without possessing truth, but it is quite impossible to believe in sacraments unless you first believe in God and His Christ and the Church. The mystic element in 'Romanism' has value to one who has faith, and its sacraments to the believer are priceless; but the paths of righteousness that faith outlines are not so easy to follow, nor the love of mysticism, in most of us so strong, that by this motive alone we should be drawn to a willing obedience, which none the less asks of us much that to flesh and blood is hard. Without truth, divinely sustained, and apprehended by the multitude through faith, it is impossible to account for those virtues which Dr. Orchard himself has enumerated as characterising the Catholic Church through the centuries. God Incarnate gave His blood in witness to the truth that the world denied: so have thousands of the Church's martyrs throughout the centuries. God is faithful: His truth never fails: neither does the witness of the Catholic Church to the faith that He has given her. The wonderful appeal that Catholic worship makes, its endurance for so many centuries, indicates an origin that is more than human. The long stream of Saints, so diverse, yet so united in their loyalty, points to the Spirit of God, one in nature, but manifold in its manifestations, working continuously therein. The passionate devotion and self-sacrifice that Catholicism inspires, bespeaks the personality of Christ still living in His Church. That large heart for common humanity which she possesses, and the affection it evokes in God's poor, is one of Christ's own most especial characteristics. A faith, a devotion, a saintliness, a love, a loyalty, a spirit

[1] *Faith or Fear*, p. 155.
[2] *The Outlook for Religion*, p. 215.

of self-sacrifice, so Christlike and so enduring, can be accounted for only on the supposition that the Catholic Church is truly God's Church, sustained and guided in her holiness by Him whose Spirit she so plainly manifests.

5. *The Prevailing of the Spirit through the Centuries.*

§ 33. Thus far we have considered the Church as she is, but if she has been truly guided by the Spirit, unity, catholicity, apostolicity, and holiness should be characteristic of her throughout the centuries. Her history, therefore, so far from filling us with 'repulsion,' should, on the contrary, inspire us with confidence. And so it will do, provided we interpret it in the light not of our own fancy, but of the promises Christ made. Nearly all the attacks that are made against the Church on the score of her 'past' are due to a false 'hypothesis,' which is no less fatal in history than it is in science. Start with the wrong one, and it will not 'fit' the facts, which in consequence will become unintelligible and contradictory. We must not read into Christ's promises either more or less than they contain. He did not, for instance, say that evil would disappear, even in His Church, but simply that it would not prevail. He did not say that error would make no attempt to destroy truth, but merely that its efforts would be unavailing. He did not say that there would be no schisms, no separated branches, no 'other sheep,' no prophets who, in ignorance or with wilful intent, should endeavour to tear His Kingdom asunder, but simply that, in spite of this, it should remain undivided. On the other hand, He did say that the Spirit should teach His Church all truth, i.e., that she should possess all revealed truth and should preach all that He had commanded her to preach. He also said that the Spirit should *lead* her into all truth, i.e., that, as her consciousness of the significance of revealed truth developed, error should never creep in. The organism through which the Spirit operates to this end is human. Its members are human beings, fallible and sinful. They have organised themselves in a human way; and all that they do to preserve and propagate and express their faith, to guard it from error, to ensure that its precepts are observed, they do in a human manner. But in that corporate human society, humanly organised and humanly developing, the Spirit of God dwells, so guiding and so controlling it in all its operations that, no matter what its members may do or attempt to do, it cannot fail in that function for which it was called into being. The Church *must* preach the truth which makes for righteousness, the truth which Christ revealed; and, as a

corporate organism, she cannot preach anything but this truth. If error arise or sin make headway, her inherent vitality is such that it invariably overcomes the disease; and if external forces attempt to destroy her, though she may suffer, she never succumbs. Her life, like that of the Jewish Church, is one long struggle between the powers of good and of evil; but, since she exists, like the Jewish Church, for a definite purpose, that purpose she must inevitably fulfil.

§ 34. How does this concept of the Church, which Christ Himself has bequeathed to us, harmonise with the facts of history? If the Gates of Hell have not succeeded in destroying her, it is certainly not for want of trying. They have attacked the Church ceaselessly and in every conceivable form. First Judaism, then the Empire of Rome sought to put an end to her existence, while at the same time dissension and heresy were threatening her from within. Yet in spite of such scandals and most bitter persecutions, she grew and multiplied; her faith developed, and her unity became ever more clear. When this long period of strain and rapid progress at length came to an end, fresh attacks on her heritage of truth arose, far more violent and more subtle than those which St. Paul and St. John were called upon to combat. One after another every one of her most vital doctrines was impugned. From each successive struggle her faith came out unscathed. At one time, it is said, half the world became Arian; at another time Arians overran Italy and conquered Rome. Yet it was Rome's truth, not the heresy of Arius, that was destined to survive. The whole weight of the Imperial power, now nominally Christian, was thrown into the balance, now on the side of the orthodoxy, now on that of heterodoxy, as it suited the Emperor's convenience. It made but little difference: the faith of Rome invariably prevailed. Amid the chaos that ensued on the fall of the Western Empire the Gates of Hell redoubled their efforts. Again and again the East broke away from the unity of the Church, while in the West barbarism became everywhere rampant. Never, perhaps, in the whole course of her history was the Church in greater danger than she was in the ninth and tenth centuries. But what happened? Though the East, after having repented of her errors time and again, eventually seceded, thereby endangering the mark of catholicity, while in the West the mark of holiness was threatened by a widespread decadence, in neither of these respects did the Church succumb. In the West there are no Churches uniate with the East, but in the East there are as many uniate with the West as there are races and provinces. It is the Church which has Rome as its centre, therefore, that has retained her catholicity, not the

schismatic Orthodox Church ; as it is she, not the Orthodox Church, that has continued to thrive and develop. So also did she recover under Hildebrand from the chaos produced by the inroads of millions of barbarians.

§ 35. In the Middle Ages danger threatened alike her liberty, her unity, and her very existence. The whole of the East was overrun by the power of Mohammed, to which a large part of it has remained subject to this day. In the West, after a long and bitter struggle, Christianity was triumphant. Meanwhile the growth of a new Imperial power brought with it fresh conflicts between Church and State. The first period of the terrific struggle for control of ecclesiastical appointments ended at Canossa in a victory for the Church. But the warfare was speedily resumed. The State gained control not only of episcopal, but of papal elections. Schism ensued, which, arising as it did in the very centre of Christendom, threatened to destroy Catholic unity by tearing asunder its heart. But the Spirit of unity, still living, eventually prevailed.

§ 36. Consequences had still to be dealt with, however. With the decline of discipline, a whole host of abuses had sprung up which menaced the sanctity of the Church by destroying its existence in many of those by whom it should have been maintained. Heresy followed in the guise of a remedy. Whole nations forsook the Church, calling her Antichrist, and treating her as the enemy of religion. Both her sanctity and her catholicity were now threatened. Yet she still lived. Her faith, her worship, her devotion survived the Reformation as they had survived the period of decadence which preceded it. Not only did a great revival take place, but amid that tremendous conflict, which spread over the greater part of Northern Europe, the Church found energy to establish new and prosperous missions in India, Japan, and China, while in the countries that had been lost to her she still maintained her existence in spite of persecution, and, now that persecution has vanished, is rapidly regaining there her strength.

§ 37. After the Reformation came the rise of Gallicanism and Josephism, the struggle with Atheism in France, culminating in the French Revolution ; then the loss of the Papal States, and the Kultur-kampf in Germany. From each of these struggles the Church has come out victorious. Is she any weaker now that her temporal power has gone ? Is her faith less constant, her devotion less sincere ? No one can say that it is. Governments no longer do her bidding. Some are openly hostile, jealous of an influence which they cannot control. But she still addresses them, points out the unchristian principles that from time to time gain a foothold

in their midst, or, risking their displeasure, exhorts them in the name of Christ to peace. She is still to the world what Christ made her, the vehicle of the message that He brought. In spite of heresy, her faith has never faltered; in spite of secessions, she is still Catholic and One; in spite of all that sin has done to destroy the mark of sanctity, it still endures, as she herself endures in spite of all that error, disease, calumny, hatred, and persecution have done to destroy her very existence.

§ 38. How is the historian, or indeed any one else, to explain these palpable facts unless he supposes that within the Church there dwells that divine Spirit which Christ promised? Dynasty has succeeded dynasty; empires have come and gone; one social order has given place to another; yet the Catholic Church has survived them all, and to each has preached Christianity. The civil history of Europe is punctuated by periodic revolutions: the Roman Empire gave place to barbarians and chaos; out of chaos under Christian influences was evolved Mediævalism; there followed the Renaissance, then the Reformation: Europe had exchanged a host of petty tyrants for a few despotic kings; out of autocracy successive revolutions have at length produced democracy; and that is where we stand. The Catholic Church alone survives. She has not only outlived all these revolutions, but she has lived through them, yet without herself ever once being revolutionised. Not merely her faith and worship have remained in all essentials throughout the changing centuries unchanged, but also her constitution and her unity, and the marks which from unity flow, catholicity which is unity in extension, apostolicity which is unity in time, and holiness which is truth's unity expressing itself in action. The contrast between the endurance of the institution Christ founded and that of the institutions of men is remarkable. How shall we explain it except on the supposition that in it He lives?

§ 39. To which the critic may reply with Dr. Orchard that thus far the argument holds good, but that there still remains a dilemma. God is not cruel or intolerant or stubborn. He does not persecute or approve of scandalous lives. His spirit is not excommunicating, legal, or military. He would neither condescend nor does He need to use intrigue and espionage. Since, then, God's ways and ecclesiastical ways are so very different it would seem to be impossible that the Church can be informed by His Spirit and guided by His hand, as she claims.

The premisses we may readily grant. It is hard to read the history of the Church and not be staggered by the evils that seem sometimes to have held her in their grip. There have been bad

popes, worse cardinals and bishops, disgraceful lives amongst the clergy, high and low, secular and regular. There have been bigots, persecutors, tyrants. There has been worldliness, greed, and unedifying diplomacy. But did not Christ warn us of this? To contemplate with equanimity such scandals, all of which might have been avoided, is not easy even in retrospect; but when we look back upon the history of the Jewish Church, or remember Christ's own emphatic words and His action in choosing one apostle whom He knew would prove a traitor, is not this almost what He seems to have expected? And, if so, did He not provide for it? Sin is always possible, and always will be possible even in the highest places so long as they are filled by human beings. Its possibility is depressing to think of, its actuality, past or present, deplorable and repulsive. But are not sin and its consequences, as they appear in the Church, very much like the clouds which overshadow the heavens, behind which the sun still shines, ever breaking forth in all its brilliance after each successive storm, ever filling us fragile mortals with divine consolation in the midst of human despair, ever assuring us, like the rainbow, that never again shall this sinful world of ours be entirely submerged? The real question surely is not whether sin exists in Christ's Church, not whether her ministers are often unfaithful and sometimes disgracefully so, not whether the Church, as a human organisation, is even yet full of blemishes and faults, but whether God has provided for all this, whether He sustains His Church and will continue to sustain it so that His image may ever remain therein and *cannot* be destroyed, no matter how feeble human co-operation may sometimes become, nor what efforts enemies and sinners within or without may make, wilfully or unwittingly, to destroy it.

As you answer this question, so will you believe in the Church or not; and the answer to it is given in Christ's promises, which history has so marvellously verified. That an organisation such as the Catholic Church should have survived at all is sufficiently wonderful, nay, when one bears in mind the revolutions that have so frequently taken place around her and amongst her own people, is little short of miraculous; but that she should have survived in spite of the ugly methods and repulsive features which her well-meaning friends find so perplexing to contemplate, and through it all should have retained her vivid faith, her passionate devotion, her power over men's hearts, and the loyalty and love of Christ's poor, is plainly and wholly impossible unless God has been with her, as He said. The 'sins' of the Catholic Church, real or imaginary, so far from proving that she is not Christ's Church, on the contrary provide a crowning and irrefutable proof that she is.

6. *Infallibility.*

§ 40. Of infallibility, as such, we have said nothing so far for two reasons. First of all, it is hardly necessary, since it is implied in the corporate guidance which Christ promised and gave. Once a man accepts the Church as the vehicle of the Holy Ghost, he will have no difficulty in accepting either the infallibility of the Catholic Church herself, or that of her head, which she herself has defined. Secondly, owing to the fact that infallibility is the most controverted of all points between Catholics and Protestants it is apt to get somewhat out of focus. Infallibility is not one of the truths which Christ sent His Church expressly to teach: it follows from the fact that He did send her to teach, and empowered her to teach, nothing but the truth. It is not the end for which He died, or which He founded her to aid Him in accomplishing: it is one of the means by which in her that end is attained. It does not pertain to the content of faith in the same way that belief in Christ's redemption pertains to it, namely, as a life-giving truth, but as the way in which that truth is made manifest. The doctrine of infallibility is primarily an answer to the question *how* does Christ teach, not *what* does He teach. Nevertheless infallibility is vital, since without it we could never know for certain what Christ does teach; and it also pertains to the content of faith, in that Christ promised it, sustains it, guarantees it, and on account of it bids us hear and obey the Church as we would Himself. Christ died that He might redeem us from sin and from the penalty of sin. But we are not redeemed *merely* by Christ's death. We must co-operate, must appropriate the merits of His redemption, must make them our own through faith. Consequently Christ did more than die for the world that He might redeem it from sin and purchase for it eternal salvation; He also provided a means by which we might know this: told His apostles of it, convinced them by signs and wonders of its truth, then bade them take His place and, going into the world, teach it this truth for all ages.

§ 41. But how were they to do this? How were they, sinful, fallible, mortal men, to take the place of Him who was truth and holiness and life incarnate? What was to prevent them from forgetting the things that Christ had taught them? How were they to interpret and apply them? How get at the meaning of this saving truth, wrapped as it was in parable, and committed to them rather in the form of fact than in that of doctrine? What was to hinder it, as ages rolled by, from becoming interpolated, mutilated, transformed? He who bade them carry on the work

of redemption which He Himself had by sacrifice accomplished, told them how this was to be done. He would be with them Himself in Spirit to the end of time, would send His Spirit upon them that it might abide with them, the Spirit of Truth which should prevent them from error and failure in the work He had given them to do. If that Spirit was not given, the whole preaching of Christ's Church is one long catastrophe. If it was given, the Church is infallible. Human as she is, and ever must be, in all her ways, prone to error and sinful as all her members are from the highest to the lowest, in fulfilling the function for which she was called into being the Church cannot err, if she would, for God is with her.

§ 42. But, says the historian, the procedure and method of Christ's Church, as recorded in history, is a human process for which human agents, acting in a human way, are responsible. Starting with facts which they had observed for themselves, the apostles handed these down, as other historical facts have been handed down, by word of mouth and by writing. Then Paul and the Fourth Gospel interpreted them, adopting for this purpose the modes of thought that were current in the religious philosophies of their day. The 'Fathers' carried on the same process, and, when disputes arose, it was in accordance with this man-made tradition that they were determined. Moreover, such decisions, he adds, were enforced partly by the Church and partly by the State, and not always by methods which we in this twentieth century should approve of. Whence the conclusion that Christian dogma is mainly the product of human processes, and has been formed by the intermingling of the 'logos' doctrine of the Greeks and the legalism of the Latins with the judaism of St. Paul.

What of all this, even supposing that the whole of it be strictly accurate? Were the philosophical concepts and methods of Jews and Greeks and Latins so hopelessly devoid of truth that they could not be adapted to divine truth or become the medium of its clearer expression? Is interpretation always erroneous? Is it not rather by this means that facts become intelligible and knowledge advances? Does not the knowledge of reality consist in interpreting facts by means of principles *which already facts imply?* Does not science seek to *define* these principles, which, when verified, it accepts as 'laws,' and so from the definition of one law proceeds to the definition of another, which also facts seem to implicate, and which it hopes that they will verify? And is not this precisely what has happened in Christian theology, except that the facts with which it starts, being *historical*, are not ever being added to as they are in science, but are 'given' once and for all, and with

all their implications? Nay, further, is it not precisely because Catholic theology does proceed by this method of defining yet more and more clearly what facts imply, that it makes progress, whereas other theologies, Protestant or Modernist, are ever being revolutionised and starting afresh? Why, then, should this process, so natural, so human, so reasonable, have gone wrong? Seeing that the acutest intellects that the world has ever known have taken part in it, and have been substantially agreed in their conclusions, is it not more probable, even from the human point of view, that this progressive evolution of the explicit from the implicit has attained truth, and that the new-fangled interpretations of the hour, ever changing and ever contradictory, are erroneous?

§ 43. That, at any rate, is what Catholics prefer to believe, but their belief is not founded merely on reason or probability; it flows from their belief in Christ's promises and His power to fulfil them. Infallibility was promised, and that is the way it works. It is not effected by a *deus ex machina*, but just simply by the indwelling Spirit, co-operating with the Church in its work of explaining and applying the truth which the facts of the Gospel imply. As under the old dispensation, so under the new, God works not only through prophets and preachers and reformers called for some special task, through saints and miracles and answers to prayer and wonderful outpourings of grace, through the peace and power which virtue gives, and through the scourges which ensue as the consequence of sin, but also through each and every member of the Church, pope and bishops and priests and people, using them as instruments, each in his own proper function and sphere, for the attainment of the end He has in view. Infallibility is not a miracle. It is God, co-operating with the action of His Church, invisibly yet effectively, with a view to His promise and end. The Church is a congregation of men, not all of whom are faithful; yet it is also the Body which the Spirit of Christ animates. Her councils are assemblies of men, not all of whom, as Cranmer remarked, are governed with the Spirit and Word of God; their definitions are the result of argument and are decided by a majority of votes; yet the whole procedure, human as it is from agenda paper to final confirmation, is so overruled by the providence and power of God, that in things pertaining to God the ultimate decision and decree expresses, and cannot but express, the Mind of Him whose Body the Council represents. It is this divine power, ever active yet not necessarily visible, ever operating through men but not necessarily always through good men, that accounts for the infallibility of the Church, as it accounts also for her unity, her holiness, her catholicity, and for the marvellous

vitality which she has displayed throughout the centuries in a world of ceaseless death and revolution. Unless there be such a power, not only are Christ's promises unfulfilled, but the endurance of the Church is unintelligible. Granted such a power, ever watching over and co-operating with the Church which it created, her wonderful fidelity to the faith, her extraordinary power of recuperation, the survival of her so many and striking virtues, amid evils which at times have been so vast as to make revival seem hopeless, the endurance of her teaching, her worship, her sacraments and her polity, through ages during which the products of man's intelligence have been in a state of perpetual flux, fits into the scheme of things and ceases to be an anomaly.

§ 44. But what of the infallibility that is called papal? Does not that mply a *deus ex machina*, divine intervention startling and sudden? No one who has studied it in the concrete can possibly so imagine. It works through human processes every whit as naturally as does that of the Church, of which it is but the final expression. As the infallibility of the Church is the means by which we know surely what Christ teaches, so the infallibility of the head of the Church is the means by which we know surely what the Church teaches; and this we must know at least in the limiting case, if infallibility is to be of any practical value. But there is nothing miraculous or extraordinary about the process by which we come to know this. A Council discusses and prepares decrees, which it submits to the Pope for approval. If he approves them, which he does by the perfectly natural act of putting pen to paper as a signatory to the document presented, those decrees are regarded, and always have been regarded, by the whole Catholic world as binding in conscience, whether as Creeds or as disciplinary enactments. If he does not so confirm them, they are not regarded as binding in conscience.

So the Church has always believed; so it has always acted. And what more reasonable or natural, if the Church has power to declare what is of faith or not of faith, and what is binding or not binding in conscience, as Christ plainly promised? Not that infallibility is operative only in this way. It proceeds from the Spirit which dwells in the Church as a whole, and so is operative always and through all of her members. But not through all in quite the same way. As the Spirit was given first of all to the apostles, and was shared by others only when they joined themselves to the apostles, as members of that society of which the latter were the spiritual guides, so th Spirit, as the source of unfailing truth, still resides primarily in those whose function in the Church is identical with that of the apostles, and through

them in the flocks that are joined to them. Similarly, as amongst the apostles one was appointed a leader, to whom was given power to strengthen the faith of his brethren and to feed the whole flock in Christ's place, so even now amongst the bishops the same function endures in him who is Peter's successor.

§ 45. The infallibility of the Church is thus vested in a special sense in the bishops, and in a still more special sense in the Pope. But in what sense? That the operation of the Spirit in declaring truth becomes known through the act by which Peter's successor confirms conciliar decrees has always been acknowledged by the Church. But what is the implication? That question was asked of the Vatican Council in 1870. Its answer was that as infallibility is operative in a special sense through the confirming power which Christ promised and bestowed upon Peter, so also must it in a special sense reside in him who possesses that confirming power as Peter's successor. This being so, it is possible for the Pope to exercise his power apart from conciliar enactments, provided he make it plain that he wishes to do so, by promulgating a decree concerning faith or morals, as binding upon the whole Church, in virtue of his office as her chief pastor. As the vital truths of Christianity, implicit in the facts of Christ's life, have become more clearly defined in course of centuries through the operation of Truth's guiding Spirit, so have the means by which truth becomes known, implicit in the acts of Christ's Church, become more plain as they have been progressively defined under the guidance of that same Holy Spirit. Papal infallibility is no new dogma. Its definition signifies merely that what the Church has always recognised by her action, she has now declared expressly to be an article of faith, since it is by this means that Christ's promises are verified.

7. *Conclusion.*

§ 46. Such being the position of the Catholic Church, what are the conditions of a Catholic-Protestant reunion? They are what we found the conditions of any Christian reunion to be at the outset—agreement in matters of faith and all that depends upon faith, for it is by faith that salvation is born within us, and by faith that it grows, until we become fit to pass from earth to heaven, from faith and hope to knowledge and realisation. But it must be Christ's faith, whole and entire, as He revealed it. Granted that Christ has made known to us the mystery of God's dealings with man, we must believe what He tells us, for *He* knows, whereas we only guess and infer. Granted also that He has appointed

a way in which this faith shall come to us, it is in that way that we must seek to attain it. On both these points all are agreed, for it is only on matters which he regards as no longer pertaining to faith that any Christian ever thinks of compromise, and only because he recognises or fails to recognise this or that means as a divinely appointed rule of faith that he accepts or repudiates it. Convinced, therefore, of the justice of her claims in regard to faith, the Catholic Church cannot yield here, without betraying her trust, nay worse, without denying the Holy Spirit which abides in her.

§ 47. Nor would it be of any advantage to anybody if she did yield. On the contrary, it would destroy her value alike for those that are within her fold, and for those that as yet are without. Those within her believe what she teaches, because they believe that in this matter she is infallibly guided by God's Spirit. If she repudiated what she had said, or allowed it to be treated as doubtful, the whole ground of their confidence in her would be destroyed, and with it their belief in each and all the mysteries that Christ has revealed, even in redemption itself; for Christ in that case would have been false to His promises. Also to those that are without would she cease to have value, for it is her wonderful fidelity to the faith through the centuries that constitutes for them her chief attraction. Had she proved a spendthrift, they would despise her. It is not merely because she embraces so many millions within her fold that Protestants are now anxious to reunite with her, but because in her they do not find that wavering in faith which is becoming more and more conspicuous in their own Churches. They look to Peter not merely for numbers but also for strength, and hope to gain from reunion with his see, if not infallibility, at any rate greater constancy in the faith. There are but two grounds of unity, either polity, which is the bond of unity in the Anglican Church and is compatible with the utmost heterodoxy; or faith, which is the bond of unity in the Catholic Church and ultimately implies infallibility, since without belief in the Spirit's infallible guidance it could not possibly endure. Were the Catholic Church to surrender, or even to abate, her claims in the matter of faith, she would not only be denying the existence of the Spirit within her, but in so doing would destroy the very reason for her existence, and would render reunion with her valueless and futile.

§ 48. On the other hand, not all that the Catholic Church inculcates and practises falls under the head of revealed truth or implies the exercise of infallibility, and it is thus with many matters that are in dispute between Catholics and

Protestants: celibacy, for instance, communion in one kind, the use of a dead language in her liturgy, abstinence, fasting, the question of extempore prayer, lay preachers, lay representation in synods and councils, lay management of the temporal affairs of a parish, the advisability of granting to the laity a voice in choosing their pastors. In questions such as these, where faith is not directly involved, the practice of the Church has varied in the past and still varies in different places. There is neither any need for uniformity, nor is it always desirable, seeing that nations and races differ considerably in their mentality and habits. Each question must be decided on its merits, and as a matter of fact has been decided on its merits, with a view to promoting efficiency and devotion in God's service in each particular age and province. Bearing in mind the function of the clergy, the single-mindedness required, the distractions of a married life, the question of ways and means, the work of the confessional and of foreign missions, and the infection to which the clergy, in the exercise of their functions, are frequently and necessarily exposed, the Church has ordained that her clergy in the West shall remain celibate. Convince her that the disadvantages from the Christian point of view outweigh the advantages, and she would unquestionably modify her practice, or adopt that of the Uniate East; but her experience thus far tends rather to confirm her in her present attitude. Similarly in regard to the position of the laity, the disasters that have resulted in the past from lay control over ecclesiastical appointments, the need that all preachers of the gospel should be as free as possible from non-religious influences, and the authority which is inherent in the very nature of the apostolic office, must be weighed against the fact that in their knowledge of ecclesiastical matters the laity are far more competent than they used to be, and that, since the onus of supporting their clergy now falls almost entirely on the populace, it is natural that it should possess the privileges of patronage as well as its burden. Were the Catholic Church to become in this sense more 'democratic,' she would sacrifice no principle. Neither would she do so, if she modified her practice in other matters, such as the language of her liturgy or the question of lay preachers. But Protestants should remember that the demand for such changes comes not from within but from without, and that even amongst themselves opinion in these matters is by no means unanimous. Were there one united Protestant Church or even any considerable body of Protestants who proposed to accept the Catholic faith and to reunite on this basis, they would not find Rome more intransigent toward their customs and wishes than she has been

toward the Uniates of the East. On faith alone is she immovable, and that because she neither dare, nor could she, tamper with the revelation that Christ has entrusted to her care.

§ 49. Is this attitude unreasonable? Protestants sometimes claim that it is, but their sole ground for doing so is their belief that the Church has added to what Scripture teaches. This contention, of course, supposes the validity of the Protestant rule of faith, but even apart from that it cannot be substantiated. To prove each and all the doctrines of the Catholic Church from Scripture is certainly impossible, but it is also impossible to prove that they are incompatible with Scripture, or that, like her worship and her polity, they are not therein already suggested. The Church of the New Testament was unquestionably a simple Church as compared with the Church of to-day, but she was already becoming rapidly more complex. The doctrine of St. Paul and of the Fourth Gospel goes far beyond that of the Synoptics, and the setting apart of deacons for the work of serving tables, the gathering of the apostles and ancients to discuss the problem that Paul's missionary journeys had given rise to, the appointment of elders in each new church, and the giving of plenary powers of visitation to Timothy and Titus, not to mention the circulation and liturgical reading of the New Testament writings themselves, indicate a marked development in polity and organisation. Of worship the New Testament says but little. Christ Himself worshipped in the Temple, where ritual and ceremonies were gorgeous and elaborate. His apostles continued this practice for some time, even after they had become Christians. They also met together for the breaking of bread and the prayers; and, whatever these expressions may signify, there was at any rate, even in New Testament practice, a chalice of benediction and a partaking of bread which showed forth the Lord's death till He should come, which could be contrasted with the sacrifices offered to idols, and of which those who partook unworthily ate and drank to themselves judgment, not perceiving the body of the Lord. There was also baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, penance, fasting, vows, a holy state of matrimony, the anointing of the sick, the laying on of hands, and a collection plate.

§ 50. Catholic doctrine and practice, then, to say the least, harmonise as well with Scripture as do Protestant doctrine and practice. But that is not the main point. The doctrine and practice of the early Church did develop, and out of it by a process, slow but continuous, has evolved the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church of to-day. Protestant doctrine and practice, on the other hand, began with a clean-cut break, and, instead of

developing, has slowly but surely decomposed, until at length there is no particle of the original faith that is not vigorously impugned. In addition, throughout the evolution of her faith the Catholic Church has ever been guided by tradition, which every one of the New Testament writers lays down as the rule by which revealed truth is to be preserved; whereas Protestants have invented a new rule—the self-sufficiency of Scripture—which is neither warranted by Scripture itself, nor compatible with the purpose for which Scripture was written. Again, from the point of view of faith the Catholic rule has been a marvellous success, for by Catholics no single point of Christian revelation is questioned, still less denied; whereas amongst Protestants every single point *is* questioned and by some one emphatically denied; so that their rule has proved an utter failure. Lastly, we have, on the one hand, Christ's explicit assurance that the evolution of truth in His Church should not lead to error, or on account of it His flock become divided, and, on the other hand, the appalling diversity and divisions to which Protestantism has led.

§ 51. Surely it is not unreasonable to ask as a condition of reunion that Protestants should renounce a bad rule that in reality is unscriptural and is manifestly leading to disaster, in favour of a rule which Scripture sanctions and which experience has proved to be a success. Nor is it so unreasonable as to them it may seem at first sight, to ask that they should acknowledge the Catholic Church as the only true Church of Christ. After all it is not their own mistakes, but those of their ancestors, that they are asked to give up, and for these they are in no wise responsible. Had not Luther made that initial mistake of attributing unrighteousness to false doctrine, in all probability there would never have been any Protestantism. For from that one mistake all else has followed in logical sequence. Having persuaded himself that faith was corrupt, Luther reformed it, instead of reforming discipline, with disastrous consequences alike to his followers and to the English Church, which later on adopted his principles; while even where discipline was reformed as well as faith, the consequences of reforming the latter has been loss of grip, and of the power either to attract the multitude or to satisfy its manifold needs. It was also that same mistake which led Luther and his friends to introduce an exclusively Biblical criterion as the basis of the expurgated faith they were preaching, and so to attack and repudiate the Church which clung to its Catholic traditions. The exegesis of the reformers was faulty, and their assumption that a world-wide Church, comprising many nations and races, could be identical in all respects, organisation included, with a Church that in the

beginning comprised only small groups of persecuted converts in Palestine, Asia Minor, and Rome, was ridiculous in the extreme. Yet it was on the strength of this contrast that they asserted that the existing Church had ceased to be the Church of Christ; on the ground that, as judged by their standards, she was wholly unrighteous and corrupt, that they pronounced her to be irreformable from within; and on the ground she opposed reformation on lines indicated by them that they declared her to be anti-Christ, and prophesied her immediate decease. Nor were these mere prophetic errors or errors of nomenclature, for it was on these grounds that the reformers justified their action in separating from her, and either transforming any part of the Church of which they could get control, or setting up new Churches in her place.

§ 52. What follows from this? Either Luther and his followers were right, or the Protestant schism was unjustifiable. There is no third alternative. Yet they cannot have been right. Errors of doctrine were not responsible for unrighteousness. It was not anything like so deep-rooted or widespread as they made out. The Church was not irreformable from within, but on the contrary became reformed. She did not cease to exist, as they prophesied, but, on the contrary, still exists to-day; while their new rule of faith was both invalid, unscriptural, and disastrous in its effects. On all these points, at any rate, the reformers were wrong. But, over and above all this, if the judgment they pronounced on the Church of their day was correct, for centuries previous to the Reformation there had been no Church of Christ in existence at all, in spite of Christ's repeated assurances that such a catastrophe could never come to pass. Whether His words to Peter are a promise of papal infallibility or not, they are at any rate a promise that His Church shall be built on a rock against which the Gates of Hell shall never prevail. Yet it was precisely because in their opinion the Gates of Hell had prevailed that the reformers broke with the Church. Christ also promised to lead His Church into all truth, yet in the reformers' view she had been led instead into grievous and abominable error. Nor can it be doubted that these promises were made by Christ in view of a situation which He foresaw would arise—in view of scandals to come, of false prophets, false teachers, false Christs, who should appear as genuine sheep, and so deceive some of His flock. They were, therefore, a divine guarantee that when these things should happen, the Church herself should not be shaken in faith, nor Christ's kingdom be divided, nor His flock become scattered, nor scandal and error prevail. Yet the reformers justified this separation on the ground that the rock of faith had been shaken and that scandal and error

had prevailed. Moreover, if their separation was in reality justified, the kingdom of Christ did become divided, His flock were scattered, and scandal and error in consequence have each century prevailed yet more and more.

In denouncing the old Church, therefore, and separating themselves from her, the reformers had denounced not the Church only, but Christ Himself, and had proclaimed—unwittingly doubtless, but none the less surely—not her, but Him, to be a false prophet and a liar. And, since the Gates of Hell had not prevailed, and the old Church had not ceased to be the Church of Christ, in separating themselves from her, they separated themselves and the Churches which they re-formed or founded, from the Church which Christ founded, which His Spirit was guiding, and which He had appointed as the way of salvation for all nations.

§ 53. The exclusive claims of the Catholic Church may seem out of place in this age of uncertainty and tolerant indifference, but it is foolish to shut one's eyes to the truth. There are but two ways of reading Church history. One may see in it *first* the work of God, *then* the work of man, man's work superimposed upon God's so as to disfigure and mutilate the image of Himself which He seeks to implant within His Church to such an extent that in what results it is impossible to distinguish what is and what is not of divine origin ; in which case that history is not a record of success, but a record of disaster, a story not of error overcome and hell vanquished, but of hell victorious and error becoming even more widespread. *Or* one may see in the history of the Church, God working always, through fallible and oft-times sinful man, yet none the less infallibly attaining His end, the maintenance within His Church of the faith which He implanted there at the outset and of the sacraments by which it is sustained ; in which case, though there is evil in the Church, it will seem but a transient stream, marring but not destroying, the beauty of God's image, and, though often recurring, ever removable. In the first view, the Protestant schism is justified, but truth is unattainable, Christ's promise of it a fraud and a delusion, and the survival of His Church inexplicable. In the second view, truth is attainable, Christ's promises are verified to the letter, and the survival of His Church is a standing witness, as He said that she should be, to the verity of all that He taught. But the Protestant schism in that case was not justifiable, and in consequence Protestants are outside His Church, and, though aided by the Spirit individually, are without corporate guidance in their own Churches, as experience itself would seem to testify.

§ 54. It may seem uncharitable to speak thus plainly, but it is

necessary that truth may appear. The evil of schism is so great that, as St. Irenæus pointed out, it can never be justifiable, and no true reformation can come by this means. The Protestant Reformation did come by this means, but it has ended by destroying that very faith which it hoped, by reforming, to save; whereas the old Church, in spite of ceaseless attacks, has preserved it entire through them all. Such being the case, she cannot but ask Protestants to repent of a schism which has worked so much evil, if they would again become members of her fold. Neither can she do otherwise than ask them to acknowledge her authority and submit to her teaching, since she is conscious that her Lord speaks through her voice. Yet, in truth, as it is not of their own sin that our separated brethren are asked to repent, but of a mistake which their ancestors made, so also they are not in reality asked to give up anything, but rather to receive something back again, which through no fault of their own they have lost. All that they believe, the Catholic Church believes, only she believes more than this, and this more surely, since her faith is built on a rock. It is that something which they lack, and are dimly conscious that they lack, that Protestants are asked to accept as the condition of Catholic reunion. They may or may not succeed in reuniting with one another. One hopes that they will, if by this means Catholic reunion would draw nearer; and the Anglican Church, as a *via media* between truth and the more extreme forms of its negation, may possibly be able to help toward this end. But ultimately nothing but the whole truth will suffice, and nothing short of that can endure, and the whole truth can neither come, nor endure, except in the way Christ has appointed.

§ 55. Meanwhile the separated Churches will still lie outside the fold of Christ, and their members, striving ever to recover what they lack, from time to time will discover the true solution. Realising the truth, they will have no right to remain where they are. Neither will the Church have any right to refuse them admission. How can she have, remembering the parable of the ninety and nine? Corporate reunion is not impossible, but it is a long way off, for faith with the multitude grows but slowly. God can quicken the process, and is doing so in His own way, strange as it may seem to many that behold it. But His Church cannot work in that way. Neither would it be any use for her to discuss with other Churches, far from agreed amongst themselves, the conditions of a remote and problematical reunion; apart from the fact that to do so in the way that some Americans have suggested, would be to forget the fact that she is Christ's Church and to class herself as one of the sects. The most that we can do, as Catholics,

is to pray for all, and to preach to those that will listen, remembering always and in all charity that, if under the new dispensation as under the old, the sins of the fathers are visited on their children, it is not for the sins of their own fathers alone that our separated brethren are suffering, but also for the sins of *our* fathers who drove them to desperation. Both were wrong, but we have been more fortunate, in that we have either been born in the faith, or have by God's grace been called to it from error. Let us thank Him for that, and at the same time make reparation for the sins of our ancestors by striving to bring others to the knowledge of the truth, that so, through truth, all may be sanctified together in the same fold and under the guidance of the same Divine Shepherd.

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